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DECISIONS IN OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR:
THE UNITED STATES INTERVENTION IN SOMALIA

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE



by

VANCE J. NANNINI, MAJ, USA
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Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1994

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Decisions in Operations Other Than War: The U.S. Intervention in Somalia

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This study investigates the policy decision of whether or not to disarm the various Somali clan factions during Operation "Restore Hope" (December 1992 - May 1993). With reference to the Command and General Staff College supplement to the model of analyzing a crisis situation found in FM 100-20, the situation in Somalia in late 1992 is examined in terms U.S. interests in the region, as well as the nature of Somali society (in terms of historical, economic, political and social aspects). Based upon an examination of those factors, the situation in Somalia is evaluated using the feasibility, suitability and acceptability criteria to determine if a policy decision of disarming the Somali clan factions would have been an appropriate U.S. response to the crisis.

Somalia, Operation Restore Hope, Unified Task Force, UNITAF
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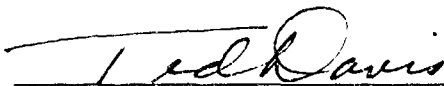
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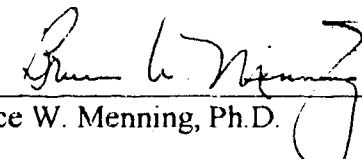
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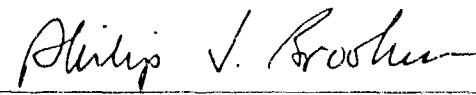
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

DECISIONS IN OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR: THE UNITED STATES
INTERVENTION IN SOMALIA by Major Vance J. Nannini, USA, 150 pages.

This study investigates the policy decision of whether or not to disarm the various Somali clan factions during Operation "Restore Hope" (December 1992 - May 1993). With reference to the Command and General Staff College supplement to the model of analyzing a crisis situation found in FM 100-20, the situation in Somalia in late 1992 is examined in terms U.S. interests in the region, as well as the nature of Somali society (in terms of historical, economic, political and social aspects). Based upon an examination of those factors, the situation in Somalia is evaluated using the feasibility, suitability and acceptability criteria to determine if a policy decision of disarming the Somali clan factions would have been an appropriate U.S. response to the crisis.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis will identify how the U.S. defined its mission in Somalia during that portion of relief operations called Operation "Restore Hope." This thesis will address the question: were the U.S. goals during Operation "Restore Hope" too limited to have a long-term effect on the situation in Somalia? More specifically, this thesis asks whether the U.S. should have attempted to disarm the clan factions in Somalia as part of the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) mission (7 December 1992 through 4 May 1993). If so, would disarmament of these clan militias contributed to stability in Somalia?

Background and Context of the Problem and the Research Question

The crisis in Somalia stems from a confluence of historical events. The world is now experiencing the true end of what has been called the "colonial period" in Africa. At one time or another, the majority of what we now recognize as sovereign countries in Africa were colonies of various European countries (in fact, the only area in Africa not colonized during the colonial period was the Kingdom of Ethiopia). Colonial borders were often drawn without regard to ethnic, tribal, or historical ties, and colonial administrations generally governed with little direct involvement of the indigenous inhabitants.

The European colonies in Africa were set on a course for independence at the conclusion of the Second World War. For some, independence came rapidly while for others (Algeria, Angola, and Djibouti, for example) independence came later. In most cases, however, the colonial administration simply moved out, leaving a people with the vestiges of European-

style administration, but without the necessary training and experience to actually run the new country. This problem was coupled with the fact that most colonies were not even free-standing entities, but had been created and maintained to fulfill the requirements of the "mother" country.

Combined with these difficulties was the fact that national boundaries left by the colonial powers did not generally correspond to any kind of natural division of the people. The stage was set for a rapid and dangerous disintegration. This was only prevented (delayed) by the beginning of the global competition between the U.S. and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies - what we now call the Cold War.

In Africa during the Cold War, the U.S. and the Soviet Union competed in the establishment and maintenance of regimes that were seen to advance their respective interests. Whether these interests included access to geostrategic locations, critical mineral deposits, or were simply attempts to block the designs of an adversary, the Cold War delayed the end of the colonial period in Africa. Each side supported its fair share of oppressive regimes. Strongmen were installed and kept in power through the allocation of money, weapons, and technical advisors (mostly advising on how to use the weapons on the supporters of the other side, but more often used on their own people) and the continent experienced a series of proxy wars, most notably in Angola, Namibia and Mozambique.

With the end of the Cold War, the U.S. and the Soviet Union rapidly lost interest in the affairs of sub-Saharan Africa. The post-Cold War policy of the U.S. towards the region has been called "cynical disengagement," in which the "myriad of seemingly insuperable socio-economic and politico-military problems" of Africa encouraged the U.S. to let other countries (principally, the former African colonial powers) deal with the continent.¹ As a result of the end of the global competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the natural order of events in the region began unfolding - only now the warring factions are significantly better armed than they would have been in 1945. Hated, ineffective rulers that governed their countries for decades have been

toppled, but now there is no superpower interest to prop up a falling regime or to help a new government get started. This was the situation Somalia encountered at the end of the Cold War.

Like many states in modern Africa, Somalia was thrown together before the people had a clear sense of nationhood. Although the Somali people are among the most ethnically homogeneous in Africa and share many cultural traits, loyalty has traditionally rested with membership in the clan as opposed to a broader concept of a nation and a central government. This natural tendency was reinforced during the colonial period when the territory that the Somali people inhabited was made parts of British, French, and Italian colonies.

When the nation of the Republic of Somalia was created in 1960, there were still large Somali minorities living in eastern Ethiopia (the region known as the Ogaden) and northern Kenya, as well as a Somali majority in Djibouti. The desire to bring all Somalis together in one nation has been a recurrent theme in modern Somali history. This aspiration was even formalized in Somalia's 1960 independence constitution as well as the five-pointed star on the Somali flag which represents all the Somali people (the points corresponding to Somalis in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya along with those of northern and southern Somalia). Unfortunately, it was this concept of a pan-Somali nation that triggered began the events which brought the country to its current crisis.

Somalia has been among the poorest nations in Africa throughout modern history. It would have been very tough for Somalia to survive as a nation-state to begin with, but its descent into chaos can be traced to a coup d'etat in 1969 that placed Major General Mohammed Siad Barre in power. Initially supported by the Soviet Union and its allies, Siad Barre established and maintained a ruthless military dictatorship. He attempted to replace the natural Somali clan-based loyalties with allegiance to the nation based on a concept of scientific socialism, yet he simultaneously played one clan against another to maintain his political power.

Siad Barre's major mistake, however, was an ill-conceived and executed war against Ethiopia in 1977-78 in an attempt to capture the Ogaden region and bring its ethnically Somali

people under the Somali flag. During this conflict, the Soviet Union abandoned Siad Barre and supported Ethiopia (Ethiopian Emperor Haile Sellassie had been overthrown by Marxists in 1974) and the Somali forces were pushed out of the Ogaden area with great losses. Additionally, tens of thousands of ethnic Somalis fled into Somalia from the Ogaden as a consequence of the war.

Siad Barre resettled thousands of these refugees in northern Somalia in an attempt to secure greater influence in the area (the majority of the refugees were from the Ogadeni clan - the clan of Siad Barre's mother and one of the favored clans under his regime). The subsequent favoritism shown to the Ogadenis by Siad Barre's government resulted in the initiation of a guerilla insurgency by the dominant clan in northern Somalia against the Siad Barre regime. This guerilla campaign began in 1981, but erupted into open civil war in 1988 after government forces went on a killing rampage in and around the northern town of Hargeisa, then the second largest city in the country, that resulted in the deaths of thousands of Somalis.² By 1989, guerilla warfare engulfed most of the countryside as various clan-based political organizations fought between and among each other for control of territory and resources. Mogadishu itself, the capital and population center of the country and the only area that Siad Barre still controlled, burst into open warfare in late 1990. This fighting ultimately resulted in the helicopter evacuation of U.S. Embassy personnel between 3 and 6 January 1991 (Operation "Eastern Exit") and Siad Barre himself was forced to flee Mogadishu on 19 January 1991.

A poorly coordinated attempt to place an interim government in power after the departure of Siad Barre was not accepted by many of the clan-based armed opposition groups. After a short pause in the fighting, internecine warfare broke out between and among the clans and the southern part of the country descended into anarchy and chaos (the area of northern Somalia -- generally corresponding geographically to the colonial British Somaliland -- declared itself as The Republic of Somaliland and independent of the rest of the country on 18 May 1991). This crisis was made even worse when a prolonged drought struck the country in mid 1992. The drought resulted in widespread famine across the country that had killed an estimated 300,000 people in

Somalia by August 1992 and placed an estimated one-fourth of the remaining population at risk of starvation (1.5 million at risk out of an estimated population of 7 million).³

This humanitarian crisis was brought into the living rooms of the world by the Cable News Network (CNN) and other coverage, much like the Ethiopian famine of 1984 - 85. The United Nations (U.N.) saw the problem in Somalia not as a lack of food itself since various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were getting a large amount of food into the country. The problem was identified as the inability to protect food shipments from warring factions once the food was in the country. The U.N. established The United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM, now referred to as UNOSOM I) on 24 April 1992 to provide a degree of security for the relief effort.

Direct U.S. involvement in the Somali crisis began on 28 August 1992 when an airlift of relief supplies into Somalia was launched from bases provided by the Kenyan government. Direct U.S. relief efforts began due to increased public attention generated by the international media as well as pressure from the U.S. Congress (spearheaded by Senators Nancy Kassenbaum and Paul Simon). Especially significant, however, appears to have been an assessment trip to Somalia led by Jim Kunder, the Director of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in the summer of 1992. Mr. Kunder's report on the situation in Somalia coincided with a cable from the U.S. Ambassador to Kenya, Smith Hempstone, which reported on the situation along the Somalia-Kenya border. Andrew S. Natsios, Assistant Administrator for the Agency for International Development (and the President's Special Coordinator for Somalia Relief), testified before Congress on 16 September 1992 that it was especially the latter two events that had "deeply disturbed" the President and prodded him to expand the U.S. initiative in Somalia.⁴

Despite the airlift of food, however, the starvation in Somalia continued. On 3 December 1992, the U.N. authorized the U.S. to lead a force comprised of over 20 other nations as the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) for Operation "Restore Hope." The mission for U.S. forces

in UNITAF seemed clear during President Bush's 4 December 1992 address to the nation on the situation in Somalia:

First, we will create a secure environment in the hardest hit parts of Somalia, so that food can move from ships over land to the people in the countryside now devastated by starvation.

Second, once we have created that secure environment, we will withdraw our troops, handing the peacekeeping mission back to a regular U.N. peacekeeping force. Our mission has a limited objective: To open the supply routes, to get the food moving, and to prepare the way for a U.N. peacekeeping force to keep it moving. This operation is not open ended. We will not stay one day longer than absolutely necessary.⁵

This theme was followed in a letter of 10 December 1992 from President Bush to Congressman Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives. In this letter, the President stated:

In my judgement, the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces under U.S. command to Somalia as part of this multilateral response to the Resolution [U.N. Resolution 794, passed on 3 December 1992, that authorized the use of all necessary means to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia] is necessary to address a major humanitarian calamity, avert related threats to international peace and security, and protect the safety of Americans and others engaged in relief operations

Additionally, President Bush emphasized that "We do not intend that U.S. Armed Forces deployed to Somalia become involved in hostilities."⁶

The mission of the U.S. forces was also clear. As specified by the Office of the Secretary Defense in a memorandum dated 8 December 1992, the mission was:

1. To conduct joint and combined military operations in Somalia, under U.N. auspices, to secure major air and sea ports, ground routes and major relief centers;

2. To provide a secure environment;

3. To disarm, as necessary, forces which interfere with humanitarian relief operations;

and

4. To protect and assist U.N. and non-government humanitarian relief operations.⁷

President Bush's decision to intervene in Somalia came after the Secretary General of the U.N., as well as U.S. officials, concluded that many more people could die of starvation without massive outside intervention. An estimated 300,000 Somalis had already died as a result of the famine, including one-fourth of the children under five years of age. Additionally, relief organizations were estimating that a thousand or more Somalis were dying from the effects of famine each day.⁸

In initiating the intervention in Somalia, President Bush emphasized that U.S. troops would be withdrawn and the security mission handed back to the U.N. peacekeeping force in Somalia as soon as a secure environment for the delivery of food had been created. In executing their mission, the U.S.-led coalition was very successful in moving food within Somalia and the number of deaths due to starvation plummeted. The UNITAF mission also re-established critical infrastructure within the country (e.g., the repair of roads and bridges) that had been destroyed during the civil war. From the inception of Operation "Restore Hope," however, various voices in the U.N. and elsewhere insisted that the UNITAF mission include disarming the various clan militias within Somalia - a mission that the U.S. never agreed to.

Nevertheless, by February 1993, U.S. military planners reported that the mission had been accomplished and Secretary of State Warren Christopher told the U.N. that the transition should begin.⁹ After a lengthy delay, the U.N. assumed the mission from the U.S.-led UNITAF on 4 May 1993. This mission, called UNOSOM II, has involved over 30,000 military personnel and civilians and has been the largest U.N. peacekeeping operation in history. At the time of this writing, UNOSOM II continues to struggle with its ultimate objective in Somalia, the precise definition of which remains elusive.

It appears that the U.N. has embarked on what can be called a "nation building mission" (again, an elusive definition) in Somalia. From the perspective of the U.N., there is no longer a functioning, responsible government operating in Somalia. A Somalia government will have to be built from the ground up, but there appears to be no clear concept or consensus of who is going to

plan, manage, and pay for such an operation. This vision of nation building is something much larger than the U.N. has attempted in the past and the exact role the U.S. is to play in this operation remains to be seen. Some observers have even identified the Somali mission as a test case for the post-Cold War world in which "localized violence [is] quelled by a multinational force for which the U.S. provided the muscle." ¹⁰

The Somalia crisis must be understood in its proper context. The U.N. Security Council Resolution that authorized the U.S.-led military force to clear the way for food relief (the UNITAF mission) was the first time that the U.N. had authorized the use of force in a nation's internal affairs. Prior to this, the U.N. considered a nation's territorial integrity and sovereignty inviolable. ¹¹ In this sense, the Somalia relief operation has set a new precedent for U.N. involvement in world affairs. We must also recognize that the current Secretary General of the U.N., Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has an exceptionally activist vision for the U.N. in the "New World Order." He envisions a U.N.-centered global collective security system based on preventative diplomacy, peace-enforcement, and peace-making. ¹² The mission in Somalia is the first real test for the prospects of such an objective. Because of this, the stakes in Somalia are high: a failure of this mission could lead to the loss of will among the nations of the world to handle future crises.

The following parameters have governed the conduct research for this thesis:

Assumptions

There will be a shortage of first-person (primary) accounts concerning the Somalia crisis. This will be particularly true in the case of the Somali side. The search for primary sources will be a continuing research objective.

Despite the absence of first-hand accounts, there will be a reasonable amount of material available to definitively answer the research question. This material is in the form of official reports, limited correspondence, news reporting, and official summaries.

Definitions

Clan. In Somali culture, a clan is a large group of people who believe themselves to be descendants (through males) of a common ancestor. This ancestor's name is also the name of the clan.

Clan-Family. In Somali culture, a clan-family is a group of clans with an ultimate common male ancestor. There are six major Somali clan-families: Darod, Hawiye, Isaaq, Dir, Digil, and Rahanweyn.

Cold War. The period of intense global competition between the U.S. and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies that lasted from approximately 1947 through 1991.

Horn of Africa. The Horn of Africa is generally understood to be made up of those nations in the northeast part of the African continent. These countries include Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan.

Humanitarian Assistance. "Programs conducted to relieve or reduce the results of natural or manmade disasters or other endemic conditions such as human suffering, disease, hunger, or privation that might present a serious threat to life, or result in great loss of property." ¹³

Irredentism. A policy or belief that advocates the reunion with the "mother country" of a separate or separated national group or region.

Lineage. A group of people who trace their descent through a common ancestor. In Somalia, descent is traced through males and the group will carry the common ancestor's name.

Nation Building. The full range of assistance to developing nations to promote growth and assist in developing self-protection measures to control subversion, lawlessness and insurgency.

New World Order. Euphemism for the post-Cold War World.

Peacebuilding. "Postconflict diplomatic and military action to identify and support structures that tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict." ¹⁴

Peace enforcement. "A form of combat, armed intervention, or the threat of armed intervention that is pursuant to international licence authorizing the coercive use of military power to compel compliance with international sanctions or resolutions -- the primary purpose of which is the maintenance or restoration of peace under conditions broadly accepted by the international community." ¹⁵

Peace-keeping. "Noncombat military operations (exclusive of self-defense actions) that are taken by outside forces with the consent of all major belligerent parties, designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an existing truce agreement in support of diplomatic efforts to reach a political settlement to the dispute." ¹⁶

Peacemaking. "Process of arranging an end to disputes, and resolving issues that led to conflict, primarily through diplomacy, mediation, negotiation, or other forms of peaceful settlement, that may include military peace support operations." ¹⁷

Peace Support Operations. "The umbrella term encompassing peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, peace-enforcement, and any other military, paramilitary or non-military action taken in support of a diplomatic peacemaking process." ¹⁸

Preventive Diplomacy. "Diplomatic actions, taken in advance of a predictable crisis, aimed at resolving disputes before violence breaks out." ¹⁹

UNITAF. Unified Task Force. The U.S.-led coalition that involved a total of 24 nations that began humanitarian relief missions in Somalia on 7 December 1992 and was relieved by UNOSOM II on 4 May 1993.

UNOSOM (also UNOSOM I). United Nations Operations in Somalia. The U.N. operation that began on 24 April 1992 and involved putting a Pakistani infantry battalion in Mogadishu to provide security for food shipments moving through the port and airfield in Mogadishu.

UNOSOM II. United Nations Operations in Somalia II. The U.N. operation in Somalia that assumed the mission from UNITAF on 4 May 1993.

Limitations

The research for the thesis must be completed prior to the end of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff Officers' Course academic year. This will limit the amount of time available to conduct appropriate research.

This thesis is undertaken as part of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College's Master of Military Art and Science Program. The resulting research is not officially sanctioned by the U.S. Army or Department of Defense. Consequently, the writer will not have the authority to demand cooperation of persons who were involved with the U.S. mission in Somalia nor will he probably have direct access to many reports that deal with the same.

As the situation in Somalia continues to unfold, new information may be discovered or made available that may significantly alter the thesis results.

Delimitations

This thesis will concentrate on how the U.S. defined its objectives with reference to the Somalia relief operation and what the ultimate result of this process has been.

This thesis will not be a history of Somalia, of the U.S. and U.N. involvement in Somalia, or an anthropological study of the Somali people or clan structure beyond that required to place the U.S. involvement in the Somali crisis in proper context.

This thesis will not be an analysis of U.N. peacekeeping/peace making operations or of the role of the U.N. in the world beyond what is necessary to support pursuit of the research question.

The research for this thesis will be conducted entirely from unclassified sources.

Significance of the Study

This study is relevant to a variety of scenarios as the U.S. continues to explore its role in the post-Cold War world. Our nation's leadership has determined that we will not play the role of global policeman, but that we may participate in international peace-keeping/peace making in a

multi-lateral operation. The U.S. has encouraged the U.N. (which appears fully willing) to play a larger role in the post-Cold War world. However, the precise role of U.S. leadership within this altered context remains to be defined.

This study will examine the crisis in the context of the changed security environment in the post-Cold War world. While it may be obvious that the U.S. must remain a key player in the international community, we must continue to analyze each and every situation in terms of our own national interest and determine our commitment based on the results of that analysis.

Endnotes

¹ Michael Clough, "The United States and Africa: The Policy of Cynical Disengagement," Current History 91, no. 565 (May 1992): 193.

² The number of Somalis killed in these battles is also disputed. Estimates range from several thousand to over 10,000 in Hargeisa alone.

³ There is no undisputed estimation of the Somali population. The last official census was taken in 1975 and even this one was held suspect (census takers were accused of overestimating the number of members of their own clan while underestimating the numbers of others). A solid estimation of the Somali population has been complicated by the nomadic lifestyle of approximately 60 percent of the population and the flow of refugees into and out of the country after the 1977 - 78 Ogaden War and the 1984 - 85 and 1992 famines.

⁴ Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, 102d Cong., 2d sess., 16 September 1992, 22.

⁵ George Bush, "Address to the Nation on the Situation in Somalia," Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents 28, no. 49 (7 December 1992): 1167.

⁶ George Bush, Communication from the President of the United States Transmitting His Report Regarding the Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia, 102d Cong., 1st sess., 10 December 1992, House Document 103-21, 1.

⁷ Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, The Crisis in Somalia: Hearing Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 102d Cong., 1st sess., 17 December 1992, 115.

⁸ Raymond W. Copson and Theodoros S. Dagne, Somalia: Operation Restore Hope. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 10 February 1993), 1-2.

⁹ Ibid., 1.

¹⁰ Michael Elliot, "The Making of a Fiasco" Newsweek, (18 October 1993): 34.

¹¹ It can be argued that there remained no government of any authority in Somalia at the time of the intervention, but many Somalis have disagreed with that statement.

¹² Boutros Boutros-Ghali, An Agenda for Peace (New York: United Nations, 1992).

¹³ U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Pub 3-07.3, Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peacekeeping Operations (Proposed Final Draft), June 1993, GL-10.

¹⁴Ibid., GL-10.

¹⁵Ibid., GL-11.

¹⁶Ibid., GL-11.

¹⁷Ibid., GL-11.

¹⁸Ibid., GL-11.

¹⁹Ibid., GL-12.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a large amount of material covering the regime of Mohammed Siad Barre, the Somali Civil War, the 1991 - 1992 famine in Somalia, and the U.S.-led humanitarian relief mission to Somalia that began in December 1992 (Operation "Restore Hope"). However, with the exception of information covering the regime of Siad Barre and earlier aspects of Somali history, most of this material is of the "breaking news" type available from newspapers and periodicals. Detailed studies of the Somali crisis will probably appear during the next few years to distill much of this material.

Because of the lack of definitive studies of the Somali crisis, research focused on the works of specific authors who offered the information pertinent to the thesis question. Particular attention was devoted to works by East Africans in general and ethnic Somalis in particular, for example, in order to capture a balanced perspective on the crisis in Somalia from people who had first-hand experience in the region. Other important sources for this study included material produced by a number of students of the Horn of Africa, especially those with personal experience in the area. Americans who have served at policy-making positions that dealt with East African affairs within the U.S. Government were also important sources for this study. Finally, there are I sought out a number of key authors who have contributed to the rapidly expanding body of literature concerning peace support operations. Their writings contribute to an understanding of these missions.

The body of literature produced by the sources identified above falls into two categories: pre-crisis Somalia (before the fall of Siad Barre) and Somalia after the fall of Siad Barre.

Pre-Crisis Somalia

Perhaps the most renowned researcher of Somali culture is I.M. Lewis. Lewis has produced dozens of books and articles on the Somalis and any researcher considering Somalia who fails to consider his body of works would indeed be remiss. Particularly helpful for this study were his book A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa (revised edition) and his article "The Ogaden and the Rise of Somali Segmentary Nationalism" in The Journal of Modern African History. Lewis has an exceptionally broad and penetrating perspective on Somali culture and his research provided the foundation for an understanding of the people and history of Somalia.

Another critical source for this study was the work of Said S. Samatar. An ethnic Somali who is now a professor of history at Rutgers University, Samatar's scholarship provided a significant insight into the nature of the Somali people. His book Somalia: Nation in Search of a State (with David D. Laitan, another veteran researcher of the Somali people) proved especially helpful in research for this thesis.

Tom J. Farer has made a significant contribution to understanding the friction between Somalia and Ethiopia in his book War Clouds on the Horn of Africa: The Widening Storm (2nd edition). This book was originally written just prior to the Somali-Ethiopian Ogaden War of 1977 - 78. In that edition, the author attempted to identify the roots of the Somali-Ethiopian crisis in the hope of creating an international effort to prevent the impending war. The second edition was written after the Ogaden war, in light of the impact of that war on the region. The second edition of this book was an important reference for identifying many of the sources of the problems in the region by a person who has been involved in the area for a long time (incidentally, Farer served as

an advisor to Admiral (Ret.) Howe, the U.N. Special Envoy to Somalia for the initial UNOSOM II operation).

Another source for comprehending recent history in the region is Arms for the Horn: US Security Policy in Ethiopia and Somalia, 1953 - 1991 by Jeffrey A Lefebvre. This book covers much of the same Somali background material as Mr. Farer's book, but from a different perspective. Additionally, this book fills a gap in the literature on Somalia, specifically by addressing the period of time between the Ogaden War and the overthrow of the Siad Barre regime in early 1991. This work is especially significant for understanding the role of arms transfers in the region during the Cold War as part of the U.S. foreign policy initiatives in the area.

Samuel J. Makinda is another author with extensive experience in the region. His book Security in the Horn of Africa covers relatively recent developments in the Horn of Africa, particularly in terms of regional security issues and the history of the involvement of the U.S. and Soviet Union in the region.

The human rights organization "Africa Watch" has produced a detailed analysis of the origins of the Somali civil war that erupted in the north of the country in 1988. The organization's book Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People provides a detailed analysis of the suppression of the Isaaq clan in northern Somalia by Siad Barre's government. This book makes detailed use of interviews with Somalis, both expatriates and those remaining in Somalia, and creates an image of the brutality inflicted on the Isaacs by the Siad Barre regime which ultimately led to the Isaaq uprising that precipitated full-scale civil war in 1988.

Finally, Somalia: A Country Study, edited by Helen Chapin Metz, provides a very concise yet detailed study of Somali culture and history. One of the newest additions to the U.S. Army's country handbook series, this edition updates much of the information available on Somalia at the time of the collapse of the Siad Barre regime and up to the initiation of Operation "Restore Hope." The book's review of the role of the clan in Somali culture was especially crucial to this thesis' exploration of this aspect of Somali culture.

Somalia in Crisis

Very little truly detailed analysis of the Somalia crisis came to light during the course of this study. There is, however, an enormous volume of material available in newspaper, magazine, and journal articles. The difficulty was distilling the relevant information from this mass of material. In order to do this, special significance was ascribed to authors with relevant experience in East Africa and Somalia. Their perspective helped to place the crisis in context.

Samuel M. Makinda was one such author. In addition to his work identified above, he has also produced Seeking Peace From Chaos: Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia. This book was one of the few detailed studies of the U.S.-led intervention in Somalia that appeared during research for this study and it provides some much needed perspective on the Somali crisis. Walter S. Clarke has also contributed to the literature on the Somalia crisis with "Somalia - Background Information for Operation Restore Hope." This report is an excellent and concise examination of the political situation that existed in Somalia at the initiation of Operation "Restore Hope." The chronology of recent events in Somalia was especially beneficial to placing the crisis in perspective.

As regards consistent and balanced reporting, Keith B. Richburg of The Washington Post provided much of the information on the post-Barre era for this study. Richburg's experience in Africa and his analysis of the Somali crisis endowed his reports with a credibility often lacking in much of the reporting on Somalia done by "disaster tourists" who flit from crisis to crisis around the world. Any future researcher of the Somali crisis should consult Richburg's reporting on the Somali crisis.

Several other authors stand out as having the necessary credibility to report on the crisis in Somalia. Richard Greenfield, for example, has the distinction of having served as a political advisor to the Somali government until he broke with them over human rights issues in 1988. Based on his experiences, Greenfield is able to present an "insider's" view of the Somali government's operations in the 1980s. Two other writers that provided much of the material for

this thesis were Peter Files and Mark Huband, both reporters with wide experience in Africa. Their works of relevance to this study are identified in the bibliography.

Two authors in particular stand out in their outspokenness concerning the U.S.-led intervention. Rakiya Omaar (an ethnic Somali expatriate) and Alex de Waal were both in leadership positions in the human rights organization "Africa Watch" until they both opposed the U.S.-led intervention in December 1992. As a result of this dispute, they left "Africa Watch" and established a separated organization called "African Rights." Either individually or together, Omaar and de Waal have greatly contributed to providing a different perspective on the situation in Somalia in late 1992 and subsequent developments in the country.

In their article "The Lessons of Famine" (Africa Report, November/December 1992), for example, Omaar and de Waal identify the impact of the 1991 - 1992 famine in the Horn of Africa and seek to dispel some of the popular myths concerning the famine. Other articles include "Somalia: At War With Itself" by Omaar (Current History, October 1991) and "Doing Harm by Doing Good? The International Relief Effort in Somalia" by de Waal (Current History, May 1993). Both of these provide useful analysis and perspective on post-Siad Barre Somalia.

Omaar's and de Waal's most detailed consideration of the Somali crisis is also one of the first reports issued by their new organization "African Rights." This report, Somalia - Operation Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, provides a well-researched and detailed study of the situation that existed in Somalia in late 1992, before the U.S.-led intervention (particularly the reasons given for the intervention) and the impact of the intervention on Somalis. This work supplies a different viewpoint on the international intervention into Somalia and it often challenges some of the popular reporting of the so-called "disaster tourists," as well as that by U.N. officials.

Transcripts of Congressional Hearings were also of great value for thesis research. An especially significant hearing was The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia held 16 September 1992 before the House Subcommittee on Africa. This hearing covered the crisis in Somalia as it existed

just prior to the initiation of Operation "Restore Hope." Testimony from Herman J. Cohen (Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of African Affairs), Andrew S. Natsios (Assistant Administrator for the Agency for International Development), and Holly Burkhalter (Director, Washington Office for Human Rights Watch) was very helpful to the development of this study.

Finally, the U.S. Army Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) has created an exceptionally comprehensive record of the U.S. Army's involvement in Operation "Restore Hope." The CALL collection on the mission in Somalia (U.S. Army Somalia Crisis Special Collection) includes detailed unclassified after action reviews written by the key participants in Operation "Restore Hope" - the index alone totals 254 pages. This source is irreplaceable for its first-person accounts of the military side of U.S. relief efforts in Somalia. It should prove crucial to future researchers of the U.S. involvement in Somalia in 1992 and 1993.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Framing the Question

The primary purpose of this study is to determine whether or not U.S. forces should have attempted to disarm the Somali clan militias during Operation "Restore Hope." The research methodology focuses on answering this question.

Determining Pattern of Research

A modified topic outline was used to focus research for this thesis. The use of this technique supported a logical pattern of organization for the research and afforded perspective through the chronological arrangement of events.

Research Model

The Command and General Staff College (CGSC) supplement to the model of "How to Analyze an Insurgency or Counterinsurgency" (in Appendix C of Field Manual 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict)¹ was used as the research model. The CGSC supplement was used in the Command and General Staff Officer's Course (CGSOC) core course C520, Operations Other Than War (OOTW) during the Academic Year 1993 - 1994.

This model is much more detailed than the one in FM 100-20 and more valid for discussing the situation in Somalia as it existed in 1991 - 1992. Specifically, the CGSC Analysis Supplement applies aspects of the Strategic Analysis Methodology to the analysis of a crisis to address a critical ingredient in any crisis: what is the impact of the crisis on U.S. interests? The model also emphasizes the fact that "indepth knowledge of a nation's history, politics, culture and

society is key to understanding how to plan and conduct direct and indirect military operations in support of U.S. national policy." ²

Although the CGSC supplement breaks crisis analysis into eight parts, the model was modified for this study to focus specifically on answering the thesis question, to avoid repetition of information, and to omit information not directly relevant to answering the thesis question. Subsequent chapters of this thesis will address each of the relevant parts of the model.

Chapter 4 of this thesis addresses the U.S. geopolitical interest in the Horn of Africa in general and Somalia in particular. This chapter is the foundation for the rest of the thesis because of the impact our interests in a region have on our reaction to a crisis in that region. The interests of other regional actors have been included in this chapter because of the interrelationship of these nation's interests and ours. An analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the elements of national power (diplomatic, economic, informational, and military), which is a part of the CGSC supplement, was omitted because of the focus of this thesis: the analysis of a coercive disarmament of Somali clan factions during the UNITAF mission which falls within the military element of national power (recognizing, however, that the other elements of national power could play a supporting role as well).

Chapter 5 of the thesis parallels part two of the CGSC supplement and examines the nature of the society involved in the crisis. This part of the model was modified for the study to expressly focus on crisis preconditions. Due to the nature of the Somali crisis, the other elements of this part of the CGSC supplement (potential destabilizing factors and accelerators) can be omitted without adversely affecting the analysis.

Somali history sets the framework for beginning to understand the Somali crisis. Aspects that must be considered for the purpose of this study include the impact of colonialism in the country and the ability of the Somalis to run their country at independence in 1960. Another consideration that must be understood is the quest for pan-Somalism and its impact as reflected in the 1977 - 1978 Ogaden War with Ethiopia and the struggle with Kenya over Kenya's Northern

Frontier District. However, for the purpose of this study, the impact of the regime of Mohammed Siad Barre on the people of the Somali state is the over-arching consideration in Somali history that must be understood to place the crisis in its proper perspective.

The nature of the Somali culture must also be understood. One of the key considerations of this study must be to examine the complexities of the Somali clan structure and its impact on the current crisis. The nomadic-herder tradition must also be recognized, especially how this tradition relates to the nomads' relation with the idea of a central government. Finally, the role of Islam in the Somali culture must be analyzed.

Chapter 6 identifies the nature of the "insurgency." The word insurgency has been placed in quotation marks to reflect that the situation that existed in Somalia in 1991 and 1992 was not an insurgency as much as it was a civil war - a very complex civil war. A detailed analysis of the various clan-based political organizations is beyond the scope of this study. The intent of Chapter 6 is to provide a framework for identifying the major organizations that were involved in Somalia in late 1991 to provide an understanding of the complexity of the political situation in the country at the time of the UNITAF operation.

In the final chapter, Chapter 7, the course of action of coercively disarming the Somali clan factions is analyzed in terms of the criteria of feasibility, suitability and acceptability. This chapter is based upon the information revealed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 and seeks to answer the thesis question based on the information provided in those chapters.

Three parts of the CGSC supplement were deleted from this study. Part 4 of the CGSC model (nature of the crisis) was incorporated into relevant chapters of the thesis (a separate chapter in the thesis was deleted in order to eliminate redundancy). Additionally, an analysis of part 5 of the CGSC model (nature of the government response) was omitted because of its inappropriateness to the Somali crisis - there was no recognized Somali government at the time of the U.S.-led intervention. Finally, an analysis of part 6 of the CGSC model (U.S. options) was omitted because of the focus of this thesis on the disarmament issue.

Conducting the Research

Research has been conducted using open source material. The intent was to keep this study unclassified throughout the research process. As discussed in Chapter 2, research focused on those authors who had first-hand experience in the region or at the policy making level as it applied to Operation "Restore Hope." Additionally, information from East African, and especially from ethnic Somali, authors was deliberately sought in order to ensure a balanced analysis of the facts.

Finally, in order to ensure enough information was provided to answer the thesis question, David Hackett Fischer's "Rules of Immediacy" (as identified in his book Historical Fallacies - Toward a Logic of Historical Thought)³ were followed in the conduct of the research.

These rules are:

1. That the best evidence be presented in support of conclusions.
2. That evidence must be affirmative and demonstrate that a condition did exist.
3. That the burden of proof is on the author and not the reader.
4. That deductions from empirical evidence are not probabilistic (that the deductions are not only possible, but probable).
5. That historical fact is presented properly and not taken out of context.
6. That the facts must not be given more precision, weight, or significance than evidence allows.

ENDNOTES

¹Appendix C, "How to Analyze an Insurgency or Counter Insurgency," EM 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 1990). C-1 - C-9.

²"Lesson 5 - Introduction to Crisis Analysis," C520, Operations Other Than War (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 3 January 1994), 67 - 92.

³David Hackett Fischer, Historical Fallacies - Toward a Logic of Historical Thought (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), 62 - 63.

CHAPTER 4

RELEVANT U.S. INTERESTS

National Security Interests and Objectives

The 1993 U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) serves as the framework for identifying the national security interests and objectives relevant to the U.S. intervention in Somalia. Although the 1993 NSS was published in January 1993 (while Operation "Restore Hope" was already in progress), it can be seen as a valid reflection of the views of the Bush Administration as it initiated the Somalia intervention in December 1992.

The 1993 NSS identifies the primary U.S. national security interest as "to ensure its security as a free and independent nation and the protection of its fundamental institutions and people."¹ Such a "survival" interest was clearly not involved in the situation in Somalia in late 1992.

It is important to examine the Cold War interests of the U.S. in the region in order to effectively analyze current U.S. interests at stake in Somalia. For over 30 years, concern over Soviet activities in Africa was the major factor in the presentation and support for U.S. programs in the Horn of Africa. In a 1984 speech, then Secretary of State George P. Schultz outlined the Cold War era U.S. policy objectives in Africa:

We have a significant geopolitical stake in the security of the continent and the seas around it. Off its shores lie important trade routes, including those carrying most of the energy resources needed by our European allies. We are affected when Soviets, Cubans, and Libyans seek to expand their influence on the continent by force, to the detriment of both African independence and Western interests.²

No presidential doctrines have ever extended the U.S. security blanket over Africa. In fact, the simple prevention of ideological and political penetration of the region by communism

was the major objective of U.S. policy towards post-colonial Africa. This policy objective persisted with little or no deviation from the approaches established by the Eisenhower administration through those of Ronald Reagan and George Bush. ³

Prior to 1979, the U.S. was content to allow former African colonial powers oversee affairs in the region. Basic American Eurocentrism assigned Africa a low priority in international affairs, with the U.S. regarding Africa as a region where the Western European powers were firmly in control and only needed American support. ⁴

This changed as far as the Horn of Africa was concerned following the twin U.S. foreign policy challenges of 1979: the fall of the Imperial Regime in Iran in January (and the seizure of U.S. citizens as hostages in November) and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December. It was after these events that President Carter brought the Persian Gulf area within the sphere of vital U.S. interests and the U.S. desperately sought to shore up its prospects for defending this region. The "Carter Doctrine" was announced during the President's 21 January 1980 State of the Union Address when he stated that "twin threats to the flow of oil - from regional instability and now potentially from the Soviet Union - require that we firmly defend our vital interests when threatened." ⁵

Until the fall of the Shah, Western security interests in the Persian Gulf were built upon the "twin pillars" of the "Nixon Doctrine" - Iran and Saudi Arabia. This dependence on Iran and Saudi Arabia crumbled with the replacement of the pro-U.S. regime of the Shah with the vehemently anti-U.S. regime of the Ayatollah Khomeini. As a result, the U.S. frantically sought access to bases within the region to support the projection of the embryonic Rapid Deployment Force. President Carter had decided to seek access to military facilities in the region (Oman, Kenya and Somalia) after a 4 December 1979 National Security Council Meeting. However, the mission was given a very high priority after the Soviets intervened in Afghanistan in late December 1979.

It is important to note that we never saw our interests threatened directly in the Horn of Africa itself. The real threat to U.S. vital interests was across the Red Sea in the Arabian Peninsula and the security of a free flow of oil from the region.⁶ The basic strategic importance of the Horn was simple geography. The Horn of Africa's geographic position made it appear as a convenient base for projecting power into the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the African and Middle Eastern countries that border them. In reality, in the words of a noted student of the region, "strategic marginality characterizes all of the Horn."⁷

The Horn of Africa is located adjacent to two primary shipping routes that link the Persian Gulf, South Asia, and Southeast Asia with the U.S. and Western Europe. The first of these, the Suez Canal route, links the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. U.S. policy makers (as well as the Congress) have not been impressed with this route's significance. This is primarily because the two ends of the route - the Suez Canal to the west and the Bab al-Mandeb to the east - can be easily closed in a crisis. In fact, the Suez Canal was blocked from June 1967 until June 1975 and Western or Israeli trade was not severely affected.⁸ For this reason alone, maintenance of a military base in the Horn was seen as having marginal effect on broader U.S. military objectives.

The second shipping route that runs near the Horn is the Cape Route. Commerce crosses the Gulf of Aden along this route and travels close to the Somali Indian Ocean coast on its way south around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa and then onto the Atlantic Ocean. This route, however, takes approximately 18 sailing days longer than a transit from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean through the Red Sea.⁹

During the Cold War, U.S. security policy in the Third World was driven by a globalist impulse with the objective to preempt or counter Soviet penetration.¹⁰ In the context of the Horn of Africa, the U.S. strategic interests were based on two objectives: the use of facilities ashore to support military operations in the Southwest Asia - Indian Ocean areas and the freedom of

international navigation through the Red Sea/Bab el-Mandeb. Of the two, the military role of the Horn has been the most important.¹¹

It is within the broader context of the U.S. strategic position throughout the Red Sea region, as well as towards the control of Bab al-Mandeb, that U.S. - Somali relations during the Cold War must be addressed.¹² Throughout our involvement with Somalia, our overriding strategic objective was simply to acquire and maintain the capability to respond to any military contingency that could threaten U.S. interests in the Middle East, Northeast Africa and the Red Sea area.¹³ Given the Horn's geographic location astride the sea lines of communication identified above, as well as its proximity to the southern entrance of the Red Sea, and opposite the Arabian Peninsula, perhaps it is not surprising that defense analysts became susceptible to worst-case scenarios about "chokepoints" and Cold War domino theories.¹⁴

Part of the reason why the U.S. has not seen significant interests at stake in the Horn Africa is the region's volatility. Colin Legum, a noted student of the region, has identified the Horn of Africa as a microcosm of every source of conflict around the world, with:

...severe ethnic rivalries; civil wars; contested borders and open boundaries; acute religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians but, more particularly, inter-Muslim conflicts because of the challenge of Islamic fundamentalism; weak states in various states of transformation, disintegration, militarization; and external involvement. The potential for sharpening these conflicts is greatly enhanced by the economic poverty of the region as a whole; the existence of [a] million refugees and even more millions of people displaced in their own countries; and famine due to civil conflicts and cycles of devastating drought.¹⁵

Because of this political volatility, the U.S. sought redundancy in base access and the Horn occupied a marginal position in the overall scheme of U.S. foreign policy. Defense planners never expected much from Somalia in terms of a superpower confrontation.¹⁶ Since the 1940s, Ethiopia has been the preferred recipient of U.S. interest in the region (see Chapter 5 for a short discussion of the U.S. - Ethiopian relationship). Even though the Soviets shifted their support from Somalia to Ethiopia in the fall of 1977 during the Somali-Ethiopian Ogaden War, the U.S. saw this war as a purely local conflict that was no threat to vital U.S. interests.¹⁷ In fact,

despite being replaced in Ethiopia by the Soviets, the U.S. did not approach Somalia about base access until 1980.¹⁸

Part of the reason for the U.S. hesitation to approach Somalia was that the State Department's African Bureau continued to see Ethiopia as the key to the Horn. Within the professional foreign policy establishment, Somalia was seen as the "pariah of Africa" whose irredentism ran counter to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) charter concerning the inviolability of colonial borders -- borders basically established in the aftermath of the Berlin colonial conferences of 1884 - 1885 when the European powers carved up the "huge African cake."¹⁸ Somalia was seen as the principle cause of the security problems in the region and a country that used outsiders to advance its irredentist interests.

As mentioned above, however, because of the twin shocks of 1979 (the fall of the Shah and the Soviet move into Afghanistan) the U.S. felt compelled to seek access to bases in Somalia. The recently abandoned, former-Soviet base at Berbera was especially attractive because of its long (13,500 foot) runway and nearby harbor.¹⁹ Ultimately, the U.S. and Somalia signed a facilities agreement on 22 August 1980 for a period of 10 years.

A key component of this access agreement was the U.S. security assistance package for Somalia. Both the Carter and Reagan administrations based U.S. arms transfers to Somalia (as well as Sudan and Kenya) on the assumption that the Horn provided a necessary staging site for U.S. military intervention in the Middle East and Persian Gulf.²⁰ However, the U.S. remained apprehensive that Somalia would use American arms to renew the war in the Ogaden against Ethiopia. Because of this concern, the U.S. only provided "defensive arms" (small arms, recoilless rifles, towed artillery and ammunition) to Somalia. It appears, however, that the primary value to Somalia of the U.S. - Somalia connection was to deter Ethiopian aggression, not to acquire offensive capability.²¹ Somalia used its Arab connections (especially Saudi Arabia) to acquire second-hand military equipment and finance arms purchases to make up its Ogaden losses.²²

From the time the U.S. signed the access agreement in 1980 until all aid to Somalia was suspended in 1989, the U.S. provided only 20 percent of the security assistance the Somalis received during that period.²³ Of this security assistance, only \$35 million was "lethal assistance" -- composed of 4,800 rifles, 3,672 grenades, 482 TOW anti-tank missiles, 24 armored personnel carriers, 18 155 millimeter howitzers (towed), 6,032 artillery projectiles, 75 81 millimeter mortars, and 144 land mines²⁴

By the time the first U.S. arms were delivered to Somalia in 1982, interest in Somalia as a strategic asset was already declining. Berbera had initially looked ideal as a base from which to project and support power into the Persian Gulf region. Its location at 1,350 sea miles from the Straits of Hormuz could cut two to three days off of sealift time from deployments staged out of Diego Garcia or Mombasa, Kenya. Additionally, its long runway could put B-52s within striking distance of virtually any trouble spot in the region.²⁵ In retrospect, the facilities at Berbera were deemed important largely through default - there were no practical alternatives at the time.²⁶

As U.S. defense analysts examined the geopolitical importance of Somalia in 1982, in a less frantic manner than was probably possible on the immediate aftermath of the events of 1979, it became questionable if Somali facilities would be needed to execute U.S. operations in Southwest Asia. Other sites in the region were identified that were available without the political risk of Somali bases. Within the context of U.S. Southwest Asia strategy, Berbera would only be a back-up facility whose loss would have virtually no strategic impact. Additionally, Berbera was one of the least defensible facilities if hostilities within the Persian Gulf were to escalate horizontally or vertically. The Soviet Union or its proxies could strike Berbera from Ethiopia to the west, from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) to the north, and from bases then under construction on Socotra Island to the east.²⁷

Thus Somali bases were always seen in the broader context of supporting our regional goals. Chester Crocker, highlighted this fact during testimony before a Congressional subcommittee when he was serving as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

Our strategic interests in the Horn of Africa are strictly corollary to our broader interests in Southwest Asia and the Indian Ocean, and our military activity in the Horn, including our acquisition of access rights in Kenya and Somalia, is directed at protecting these larger interests. ²⁸

Until the latter part of 1988, U.S. policymakers in the executive branch and members of Congress focused almost exclusively on the external dimension of U.S. arms transfers to Somalia as they contributed to the containment of a Marxist Ethiopia. Administration officials tended to view the anti-Siad Barre opposition movements as simply Ethiopian proxies. ²⁹ However, by the fall of 1988 the move by the U.S. Congress to freeze military assistance to Somalia on human rights issues met little resistance from the Reagan Administration due to the antipathy felt towards Siad Barre by the U.S. Congress, the State Department's reluctant embrace of Somalia to begin with, and the marginal military and strategic benefits offered by Somali military facilities. ³⁰

The already marginal usefulness of Somali bases totally evaporated with the events of 1989 and 1990. The Soviet departure from Afghanistan in February 1989, coupled with the improvement in U.S. - Soviet relations that began in December 1987, removed most of the remaining minimal utility of U.S. bases in Somalia. Additionally, by 1990 Somalia had lost its value as a political-strategic counterweight to Ethiopia. The Soviet presence in Ethiopia steadily declined after Mikhail Gorbachev's accession to power in 1985, and by 1990 Ethiopia was no longer viewed as a threat to anyone as it tried to cope with Eritrean and Tigray insurgencies as well as a steep cut in Soviet assistance (The Soviet-Ethiopian agreement finally expired in January 1991). ³¹

The final display of the geopolitical irrelevance of Somalia occurred during the U.S. response to the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The U.S. made no effort to renew the 1980 U.S.-Somali base access agreement and allowed it to expire in August 1990. In the end, Berbera played no role in the U.S. response to the type of contingency for which Somali bases were originally acquired. Berbera simply had its fuel stores drained off and was finally abandoned by the U.S. in December 1990. ³²

In retrospect, the Bab el-Mandeb appears to have lost much of its strategic significance as well. The development and expansion of oil pipelines to Yanbu on Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast (as well as those pipelines that run through Turkey and Syria) has reduced the significance of the Bab el-Mandeb (as well as the Straits of Hormuz) with respect to the flow of oil to the west.³³ As a result, the economic importance of the Bab el-Mandeb as an oil shipping lane has declined with the development and expansion of oil pipelines along the Red Sea coast which bypass this strait.³⁴ Only under circumstances similar to 1967 - 1975 when the Suez canal was closed would the Horn achieve a higher strategic prominence.³⁵

In summary, access to Somali bases was seen as a "post Iran thing" designed to get access and keep the Soviets out, but nothing else.³⁶ By August 1990 the strategic sacrifice of possibly losing Berbera (which was minimal) was outweighed by the political and moral costs of maintaining a security assistance relationship with Somalia.³⁷ Ultimately, the turn of events against Siad Barre in 1991, "elicited no official concern in Washington because the Soviet factor was nonexistent."³⁸ In the words of one noted student of the region, "it would be difficult to find anyone among U.S. policymakers who would argue that the Horn of Africa, let alone Somalia, is of vital strategic importance to the United States."³⁹ Indeed, according to a Congressional Research Service Issue Brief, "...the National Security Council reportedly [acknowledged] that no U.S. strategic interests are involved or at risk" in Somalia prior to the U.S.-led intervention.⁴⁰ The geopolitical value of the Horn was and will remain a function of the U.S. strategic position in the Gulf.⁴¹

The national security interest is supported by four objectives. The first, "global and regional stability which encourages peaceful change and progress,"⁴² is supported by four subordinate goals. The first goal, "protecting the United States and its citizens from attack"⁴³ is not directly applicable to the crisis in Somalia. Somalia is incapable of direct attack upon the U.S. and the presence of U.S. citizens in Somalia was very small - mostly U.S. citizens working for various relief organizations.

The second goal, "honoring, strengthening, and extending our historic, treaty, and collective defense arrangements" ⁴⁴ also does not apply to the crisis in Somalia while the third goal, "ensuring that no hostile power is able to dominate or control a region critical to our interests" must also be looked at in post-Cold War terms. It is highly unlikely that Somalia is or will soon be a direct threat to its neighbors in the region or to the U.S.

A possible concern in this realm, however, is the aspect of Islamic fundamentalism. The end of the Cold War has intensified a growing perception within the U.S. policy-making establishment that Islamic fundamentalist regimes constitute threats to U.S. interests on the African continent, including in the Horn of Africa. This view sees the decline and fragmentation of the Soviet Union and communism creating a power vacuum in the Horn of Africa that could easily be filled by "radical" forms of Islamic fundamentalism, such as the "Shia" variant of Iran. The difficulty with this argument is that there is no single Islamic fundamentalist movement. Despite periodic calls by some Islamic leaders (notably those in Iran) for a pan-Islamic movement, Islamic fundamentalism exists in different forms in Pakistan, Tunisia, Iran, Egypt and Sudan. ⁴⁵

Peter J. Schraeder has noted that the Cold War containment of communism could be replaced by an anti-Islamic variant focused specifically on the variety of fundamentalist regimes in the Middle East and North Africa. ⁴⁶ That this may be so is highlighted by the U.S. response to the 1991 coup in Algeria. The U.S. remained silent when the Algerian army annulled the first multiparty election in Algeria since independence, due to the fact that an Islamic fundamentalist party (the Islamic Salvation Front) was on the verge of taking power through the ballot box. ⁴⁷ Aspects of Islamic fundamentalism in the Horn of Africa are explored more closely in Chapter 5.

The fourth goal, "working to avoid conflict by reducing sources of regional instability and violence" ⁴⁸ is possibly applicable to the crisis in Somalia. Spillover effects of the continued chaos in Somalia had the potential to involve neighboring Kenya and Ethiopia. As noted by the veteran "Africanist" Guy Arnold, "In Africa, as part of the colonial legacy of artificial borders, it is highly likely that a conflict in one country will spill over into its neighbors as Sierra Leone has

discovered to its cost in its relation to Liberia." ⁴⁹ Domestic political problems in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan have often turned to interstate conflicts because of the spread of ethnic groups across state boundaries. ⁵⁰

However, some observers have noted that the Somali case is actually a prototypical civil war. There are no other countries directly involved, and the fighting, while terribly disastrous for Somalia, poses no direct threat to surrounding nations. While all six of the U.N. Security Council measures related to the Somali crisis in 1992 mention grave concern "that the continuation of the situation in Somalia constitutes a threat to international peace and security," the nature of the threat is never suggested. ⁵¹ The only manner in which the Somali conflict can be perceived as an international threat is in terms of the refugee problem. This justification remains suspicious, however, since the refugee problem has never been offered as an explanation or justification for the intervention. Additionally, Operation "Restore Hope" has not been geared towards the repatriation of Somali refugees. In the words of one observer, "while the refugee issue is very important, it is not a plausible explanation for UN action." ⁵²

The second national security objective, "open, democratic and representative political systems worldwide" ⁵³ is also applicable to Somalia. The difficulty will be creating the necessary structures for a return to democracy in Somalia after 22 years of Siad Barre's dictatorship followed by over two years of brutal civil war. Some students of the region do not hold out much prospect for a Somali democracy in the near future. ⁵⁴ Any prospect of establishing a Somali democracy is certain to be a long term process and some observers are even now questioning the utility of a Somali state. ⁵⁵

The third national security objective, "an open international trading and economic system which benefits all participants" ⁵⁶ is not directly applicable to the crisis in Somalia. Even before the disintegration of the Somali state, its impact economically was marginal with over 30 percent of Somalia's gross national product (GNP) made up by foreign aid. ⁵⁷ Somalia possesses no commercially exploitable natural resources and its agricultural sector, never robust, has been

devastated by civil war (especially in the southern part of the country. To put the economic situation in perspective, the combined GNP of the entire African continent south of the Sahara is less than that of Holland.⁵⁸ Additionally, U.S. economic interests in Africa remain very small - U.S. investment in sub-Saharan Africa is only 0.46 percent of total U.S. investment abroad.⁵⁹

The fourth and final national security objective, "an enduring global faith in America - that it can and will lead in collective response to the world's crises"⁶⁰ is perhaps the most applicable national security objective in the context of the Somalia crisis. The U.S. was clearly in a position to lead the intervention into Somalia and open the way for a follow-on U.N. mission. Additionally, the Somalia crisis provided an opportunity for a multilateral intervention under U.N. auspices to set a new precedent for U.N. involvement in the post-Cold War world.

The U.S. had called for the increased participation of multilateral organizations in the post-Cold War world. This was especially true of the U.N. which can now fulfill its original mission, untethered by Cold War politics. President Bush voiced his support for U.N. Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's Agenda for Peace in a speech before the U.N. General Assembly on 21 September 1992 in these terms: "so let me assure you: the United States is ready to do its part to strengthen world peace by strengthening international peacekeeping"⁶¹ as well as "we will work with the United Nations to best employ our considerable air, logistics, communications, and intelligence capabilities to support peacekeeping operations"⁶²

Other Regional Actors

When evaluating the level of U.S. interest in the Horn of Africa, it is also important to consider the interests of our friends and allies, as well as our potential opponents, in the region. In the post-World War Two period, three sets of regional geopolitical interests have intersected in the Horn of Africa. Although the Horn's strategic importance has declined with the ending of the Cold War, it remains an area of considerable interest to Egypt because of the water politics of the Nile River and the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in Sudan, to Saudi Arabia because of concern about possible radical hostile regimes along its southern coast, and to Israel because of

past Arab threats to block the passage of its ships from the Gulf of Aqaba through the Red Sea.⁶³ Additionally, in recent years Libya, Iraq, Iran, and Israel have been actively using arms transfers to penetrate the Horn.⁶⁴

Egypt's involvement in the region has been driven in part by its historical entanglement in the water politics of the Nile River. Water, not oil, is the lifeblood of Egypt with over 90 percent of Egypt's irrigation requirements met by the Nile.⁶⁵ Egypt's dependence on the Nile River is complicated by Ethiopia's control over the sources of the Blue Nile while the White Nile flows through Sudan (the White and Blue Nile converge at Khartoum).⁶⁶ Over 80 percent of the Nile River's water originates in the Ethiopian highlands and fears of an Ethiopian threat to these waters may have induced Egypt to support the Somali and Eritrean insurgencies against Ethiopia in the past.⁶⁷

Additionally, Egypt remains deeply suspicious of any Islamic fundamentalist movement in its sphere of influence. Egypt has the biggest stake in this regard because of its concern of Islamic fundamentalism from Sudan.

Like Egypt, Saudi Arabia is concerned about Islamic fundamentalist movements in the region.⁶⁸ Additionally, Saudi Arabia is among the three major Gulf powers most directly affected by events in the Horn (the other two being Iran and Iraq).⁶⁹ Saudi Arabia's concern over the Horn has decreased with the completion of the oil pipeline across the Arabian Peninsula to Yanbu on the Red Sea. This pipeline allows the Saudis to export over 50 percent of their crude oil production through the Suez Canal and bypass the Bab el-Mandeb entirely. Even so, the Saudis maintain a strong political interest in the region, especially considering signs of recent instability in Yemen, a historical Saudi rival.⁷⁰

Israel's strategic interests in the Horn focus on freedom of navigation through the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandeb. Israel faces a complex situation at the southern end of the Red Sea with a united Yemen linked to Iraq, an Islamic government in Sudan that is friendly to Iran and Iraq, and a progressive government in Eritrea.⁷¹ Although 90 percent of Israel's maritime trade is

handled through its Mediterranean ports, and the significance of the Horn to Israel has decreased since the fall of the Shah of Iran and the end of oil shipments from Iran, ⁷² coal and raw material imports reach the country through the Bab al-Mandeb.

Israel has seen its interests in the Red Sea area as supporting Ethiopia's attempts to maintain control over Eritrea. ⁷³ This support has been motivated in part to secure the release of Ethiopian Falashas as well as preventing the Red Sea from becoming an "Arab lake." To this end, the Israelis reportedly provided jet fighters and cluster bombs to the Ethiopian government while it was fighting the Eritrean insurgency (note: Israel is also reportedly supporting the Sudanese People's Liberation Army - the SPLA - in southern Sudan for much the same reason). ⁷⁴

Other regional states have more direct interests in events in Somalia. Kenya itself could be a "powder keg waiting to explode." ⁷⁵ Multiparty democracy in Kenya was ended in 1982 by the ruling Kenyan African National Union (KANU) under the political cover of controlling Kenya's ethnic divisions. ⁷⁶ Recent ethnic violence in Kenya has killed hundreds of people and displaced over 100,000. ⁷⁷

Kenyan-Somali relations have been rocky since both states gained their independence. Kenya experienced an ethnic Somali insurgency in the early 1960s (the "shiftas" or bandits) and it remains suspicious of Somali irredentism (Somalia has historically claimed part of northern Kenya). Another source of friction is continued Somali poaching of Kenya's elephant herds for their ivory. ⁷⁸

Finally, Kenya does not feel comfortable with the large numbers of Somali refugees entering Kenya. In one year, the number of Somalis seeking refuge in Kenya rose from 50,000 to over 300,000. ⁷⁹ These refugees are living in camps between the Somalia-Kenya border and the River Tana (in Kenya). The overwhelming majority of these refugees are from the Darod clan-family, the parent clan-family of Siad Barre's regime, who fled Mogadishu and the surrounding area after Siad Barre fled in January 1991. ⁸⁰

Ethiopia also has significant interest in events in Somalia. Described by one knowledgeable observer as a "heterogeneous ethno-religious conglomeration" that would have broken apart years ago except for the use of military force by the central government,"⁸¹ Ethiopia is struggling to come to terms with the formal separation of Eritrea and a new government structure.

Sudan is yet another country in the region with interests in Somalia. Once part of the U.S. security system in the region, Sudan has been in turmoil since President Nimeiri was overthrown in April 1985. Relations went from bad to worse (especially as far as Egypt was concerned) when Prime Minister Sadiq was overthrown in June 1989 and a fundamentalist Islamic regime established with its laws based on the *sharia*. Especially troublesome are consistent reports of Iranian support for the Islamic regime in Khartoum. This concern was highlighted when Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani visited Sudan in December 1991. Reportedly, this visit produced a security pact between Iran and Sudan.⁸²

Possibly the major concern in the region in terms of stability, Sudan's Islamic fundamentalist government concerns conservative Arab states in the region. The Sudanese government has become increasingly isolated internationally for supporting Iraq during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, human rights abuses against the SPLA, and allegations that Sudan is serving as a safe haven for terrorists and Islamic extremists.⁸³ Sudan is believed to harbor known terrorist groups to include *Hizballah*, *Hamas*, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and appears to be fostering close ties with Libya and Iraq. Perhaps most disturbing, however, is the increased activity of Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Sudan.⁸⁴

Sudan itself is in turmoil with a renewed civil war between the Muslim north and the Christian south in which southern Sudan has become one of the world's "darkest humanitarian nightmares."⁸⁵ This conflict is the result of yet another deep-seated animosity that is traced back to the 19th century Arab slave raids into southern Sudan.⁸⁶ Additionally, there has been widespread violence within the main southern opposition movement (the Sudanese People's

Liberation Army, SPLA) between Dinkas and non-Dinka groups. This intra-SPLA fighting has become as much an obstacle to peace as the fighting between the Sudanese government and the SPLA. ⁸⁷

It is significant to note, however, that Sudan has been the only sub-Saharan country that has provided any food to Somalia. The only other help has been Ethiopia's and Kenya's passive acceptance of refugees. ⁸⁸

Djibouti also has significant interest in the events in Somalia. Only independent since 1977, Djibouti refused to join Somalia after independence (in an effective repudiation of pan-Somalism) despite having an ethnic Somali majority. ⁸⁹ Djibouti has been embroiled in an internal crisis since October 1991 against two Afar-based insurgencies: the AROD (Rebirth) and the FRUD (the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy). ⁹⁰

The nature of this conflict involves Djibouti in the recent turmoil in the region through the make-up of Djibouti's population. The Issas, an extension of the Issaq clan in Somalia, make up an estimated 65 percent of the population while the Afars, linked to the Afars of the Danakil plains in Ethiopia, make up 35 percent of the population. ⁹¹ Although the French still maintain approximately 4,500 troops and a squadron of fighters in Djibouti, the French have so far considered the Djibouti insurgency to be an internal matter and have not been directly involved in combating the insurgency.

Other regional states have interests in the Horn as well. Libya's involvement in region has caused concern among western and conservative Arab states. Libya's principal interest in the region is believed to be competing with its Arab League rivals (especially Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Syria) for influence. ⁹² Although less prominent than in the past, some still see the ultimate Libyan objective as a uniting with Sudan. ⁹³ Libya reportedly began supplying Siad Barre's forces with military equipment in October 1989 and has also reportedly flown weapons into Mogadishu after Siad Barre's departure in order to help Ali Mahdi's faction. ⁹⁴

Iran, as mentioned above, has also been active in the area. President Hashemi Rafsanjani's visit to Sudan in December 1991 is believed to have resulted in a formal arrangement between Iran and Sudan. Reportedly, Iran agreed to finance between \$300 to \$400 million of Chinese arms for Sudan to include jet fighters, tanks, armored personnel carriers, rocket launchers and artillery.⁹⁵ Some observers have identified Iran's ultimate objectives in the region as the establishment of a permanent foothold south of Egypt and along the Red Sea. This objective converges with Teheran's ideological interest in supporting the Islamic fundamentalist government in Khartoum.⁹⁶ Additionally, there have been persistent reports of Iranian activity in Mogadishu. Specifically, Iran has been reported funding Aidid's faction while Egypt and Saudi Arabia are supporting Ali Mahdi.⁹⁷

Finally, like Iran, Iraq is deeply involved in Sudan. Although not able to provide as much support for Sudan since the 1990 U.N. embargo and 1991 Persian Gulf War, Iraq has been a major arms supplier for Sudan since late 1987. After the 1989 coup in Sudan, Iraq became Sudan's second largest weapons supplier (behind only Libya) and provided rockets, artillery, warplanes and, reportedly, chemical weapons.⁹⁸

ENDNOTES

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¹⁸Lefebvre, Arms for the Horn, 176. The US had reached an agreement in principle to provide defensive arms on 25 July 1977, but backed off when the extent of the Somali attack was revealed in August 1977.

¹⁹James P. Wooten, Regional Support Facilities for the Rapid Deployment Force, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 25 March 1982), 21.

²⁰Lefebvre, "The Geopolitics of the Horn of Africa," 13.

²¹Lefebvre, Arms for the Horn, 207.

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²³*Ibid.*, 44. The U.S. provided less than \$600 million in security assistance and cash sales to Somalia between 1977 and 1989. During roughly the same period (1977 - 1992), the U.S. provided Sudan \$1.4 billion, Kenya \$700 million, and Djibouti \$60 million. Meanwhile, the Soviets provided Ethiopia an estimated \$10 to 12 billion in arms from 1977 to 1991, in effect transforming the Ethiopian military into one of the largest and best equipped in all of Africa. In comparison, the U.S. provided Ethiopia approximately \$375 million in military assistance, training, credits and arms sales between 1953 and 1977. Also see Lefebvre, "The Geopolitics of the Horn of Africa," 10.

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- ⁶¹George Bush, "Address to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, 21 September 1992," Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents 28, no. 39 (28 September 1992): 1699.
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- ⁶³Legum, The Horn of Africa: Prospects for Political Transformation, 1.
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- ⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 18.
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CHAPTER 5

NATURE OF THE SOCIETY

Before people talk about the future, it is necessary to understand what brought this situation about. It is not only a question of what the situation is, but firstly understanding how and why all this happened. A part of the solution must lie in the answer to that question.

Khadra Muhumed Abdi
Interview with Africa Watch,
London, 2 June 1989 ¹

Crisis Preconditions

Historical Perspective - Colonial Past

The people sharing the Somali culture are spread over 400,000 square miles of the Horn of Africa and the Somalis' present way of life, based on pastoral nomadism and the Islamic faith, was established by the eighteenth century. Even though there was no distinct Somali nation prior to the colonial period, a distinctive Somali language and culture bound the numerous clans. ² By 1900, however, one of the most homogenous regions of Africa was divided into five parts.

The area of the Horn of Africa grew in strategic and economic importance with the Red Sea when the Suez Canal was opened in 1867. ³ Its importance stemmed from its location astride the short route to Europe which connected the Indian Ocean with the Mediterranean Sea. This route cut weeks off the streaming time of the alternative route that went around the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of the African continent. ⁴

Four different powers carved up area the inhabited by the Somali people. The British occupied the north-central part of the Horn beginning in 1884. For the British, the Red Sea route was seen as critical for maintaining the defense of British India. ⁵ Their primary purpose for a

Somali colony was to provide mutton and beef for their port at Aden, across the Red Sea from Somalia, which supported naval traffic between India and Britain. The significance the British placed on Somalia itself is epitomized in a statement by Foreign Secretary Lord Salisbury, who observed that Somalia was "a coast without harbors, trade, produce or strategic advantage. But as everybody else is fighting for it, we are bound to think it valuable." ⁶

The French moved into the north-west portion of the Horn, the Territory of the Issas and Afars (modern Djibouti) in the 1880's in response to their ejection from Egypt by Britain. The French objectives were to maintain a coaling station on the Red Sea to support their naval link with their colonies in Indochina. ⁷

For the Italians, newly unified in 1888, a colony in the Horn was driven by what was still available to be colonized in Africa. ⁸ The Italians were late-comers to the "game of nations" and the Horn of Africa was one of the few places left to establish parts of an empire (note: the southernmost part of Italian Somaliland was ceded to the Italians in 1925 by the British - formerly Jubaland and contiguous with British colony in Kenya - as part of terms of the 1915 Treaty of London, the World War I alliance between Italy and Britain). ⁹

Finally, the Ethiopian encroachment into Somali territory had long historical roots in the imperialistic ambitions of a succession of Ethiopian emperors. ¹⁰ The Somali-Ethiopian territorial dispute arose directly from Ethiopian control over the Haud and Bale regions of the Ogaden. This expansion of the Ethiopian empire began during the regime of Emperor Menelik II (1889 to 1913) and virtually doubled the size of the empire. Ethiopian control of the Haud and Bale areas was ratified by the Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1897. This treaty was confirmed by the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1942, following the restoration of Emperor Haile Selassie (who had been ousted by the Italians in 1935). The rest of the Ethiopian-Somali border was established by treaties between Ethiopia and Italy in 1897 and 1908.

Although Ethiopian rule was resented by the Somalis, it had little impact prior to the decolonization of the British and Italian colonies. In the larger historical context, the continued

friction with the Ethiopians was nothing more than the continuation of over 500 years of intermittent conflict with the Christian occupants of the Ethiopian plateau.¹¹ The Ethiopian incursion into Somalia made the colonial division of the Horn unique in that one of the imperial powers was a local actor. Ethiopia was simply driven by its own geopolitical imperatives.¹²

Modern Somalia, as it existed in 1991, was formed by the union of the former British and Italian colonies in 1960. Significantly, there was a great disparity in the development of the two former colonies. The Italians had implemented a comprehensive plan for the colony with a threefold purpose. First, the Somali colony was intended to relieve the burgeoning population problems in metropolitan Italy by providing a "new frontier" for Italians to emigrate to and develop. Second, and directly tied to the first purpose, the Italians saw the Somali colony as living out the historical civilization mission of the Romans. Finally, the Italians saw that a Somali colony would increase their prestige among the European powers who had overseas colonies of their own. As a result, the Italians launched a relatively large scale development program in their Somali colony, including a system of banana and sugar cane plantations established in the south along the Juba and Shabeelle Rivers. Although the Italian plans for the colony were generally a failure, their administration was benign and there were no major Somali revolts during the colonial period in Italian Somaliland.¹³

The British colony in Somalia, however, remained a backwater. The British saw the colony's only purpose as supplying meat to Aden and very little was done to improve the colony's infrastructure or to develop an effective and efficient administration.

A significant historical event which took place during the colonial era in Somalia was the Somali dervish movement. Led by Sheikh Mohammed Abdille Hassan, the people of northern Somalia conducted a war of resistance against Britain and Ethiopia from 1899 to 1920 that resulted in the death of up to one-third of northern Somalis.¹⁴ Sheikh Mohammed's words to the British are prophetic:

If the country [Somaliland] was cultivated, or contained houses or property it would be worth your while to fight... If you want wood or stone you can get them in plenty. There are also many ant heaps. The sun is very hot. All you can get from me is war, nothing else. ¹⁵

Sheikh Mohammed was the first truly nationalist Somali leader and his appeal was to all Somalis, not just those of his own clan. It is significant to note that even Sheikh Mohammed was unable to overcome the ancient divisions among the Somali people and, in the end, he was forced to conclude that the determined divisiveness of his own people defeated him as much as the British-Ethiopian alliance and their associated power. ¹⁶ However, Sheikh Mohammed's ideas that Somalis are bound together by more than lineage and blood contracts did enter the rich Somali oral tradition that remains so much a part of Somali culture. ¹⁷

At the end of World War II (1945), British administration in the Horn improved and, for a brief time, all Somalis were under British rule. ¹⁸ The unification of the Somali people was short-lived, however. Despite Somali protest, Britain returned the Ogaden to Ethiopia in 1948. This move is generally seen as a U.S. initiative, as it occurred soon after Emperor Haile Sellassie granted the U.S. a communications base near Asmara in northern Ethiopia (Kagnew Base) for a term of 50 years. ¹⁹ This base was to play a critical role in the U.S. global communications system until the advent of satellite communications. ²⁰

Ultimately, the Somali issue was referred to the U.N. and, in November 1949, the U.N. General Assembly voted to make southern Somalia (the former Italian Somaliland) an Italian trusteeship for a period of 10 years, after which independence would be granted.

The difference in development between the northern and southern parts continued in post-World War II Somalia. The Italians, who knew they had to leave in 10 years, began to develop the area's political structure with initiatives in the formation of political parties, local elections, and limited self-government. By 1966, the Italians had replaced all expatriate district and provincial commissioners with Somalis. Additionally, the Italians stimulated local agriculture and improved the area's infrastructure and educational facilities. As a result of these efforts,

southern Somali exports tripled between 1954 and 1960. However, an acute balance of payments deficit could not be overcome and was only offset by foreign grants and Italian subsidies.²¹

The British, however, had no intent on leaving their Somali colony and continued to neglect development. Nevertheless, the British were instrumental in holding off further dismemberment of Somalia, especially the continued Ethiopian claims over all of Somalia.²² In past agreements with the Ethiopians, the British had implicitly promised to protect the independence of the Somali clans in their quest for the pastureland that was critical to their way of life and the British remained firm in this commitment.²³

Britain belatedly gave in to Somali demands for independence barely in time to merge with the U.N. Trust Territory (the former Italian Somaliland). However, the British colony in the north was not nearly as ready for independence as the former Italian colony in the south. British Somaliland was granted independence on 26 June 1960 and merged with the south on 1 July 1960 to establish the Somali Republic.²⁴ Due to the difference in development between the two former colonies, especially in the matters of administrative experience, southern Somalis dominated the new Somali administration when the two colonies merged.²⁵ This disparity in development and the structure of the post-independence administration has caused a resentment among northern Somalis that remains today.

Immediate Post-Independence Era (1960 - 1969)

Although there was great enthusiasm for unity, the northern and southern parts of the Somali Republic were in reality two separate countries at unification. Each had inherited a separate and distinct administrative, legal, and education system²⁶ with no standard written national language (with Arabic, Italian, and English in use to varying degrees across the country). Additionally, there were no commercial ties between the north and south. Although the U.N. established a Consultative Commission for Integration in 1960 to mitigate these anticipated problems, it was too late. North and south were united without any serious negotiations about important political and social issues beyond a distribution of cabinet seats.²⁷ Almost immediately,

there was concern among the people about the distribution of power among the clans and there was even a short-lived rebellion among junior army officers in the northern part of the country in December 1961 in response to the perceived inequality.

It is a fact that one legacy of colonialism in Africa has been the creation of potentially unstable political entities.²⁸ The inadequate process of transition from full colonial rule to independence in Somalia was a problem similar to that of many other African countries emerging from colonialism. The Somalis became independent without the necessary infrastructure and experience that would allow its leaders to cope with the strains of nation building, inter-state relations and economic development.²⁹ However, due to the relatively low level of development, especially in the north, colonial rule had not provided the preconditions for economic development - infrastructure, education, formalized markets, and insertion in the world economy - to the degree that colonialism imparted in other African colonies.³⁰

It was this economic immaturity especially - exacerbated by continued poverty, competition for land, water and scarce natural resources and dependence on world markets and financial systems they were powerless to influence - that made the internal conflict inherent in Somali society worse and increased instability.³¹ Somalia's endemic instability was shared by many other nations in Africa which were formed by force and colonial dictat instead of the more long-term processes that lead to the modern states of Europe.³²

Even so, Somalia was better off than some of the other former colonies in Africa. When the people of Guinea, for example, voted to leave the French community in 1958, the French systematically destroyed Guinea's infrastructure. Another example is that of the Belgian Congo. Even though the Conférence on Independence (for the Congo) did not conclude until 20 February 1960, the date set for independence was established as 30 June 1960, barely four months later.³³ The resulting chaos in the Congo, which included a large U.N. intervention from 1960 through 1964, was directly related to the lack of preparation for independence.

Somalia's situation at independence was very different from other African states, however, in one significant way. Most other African states had to struggle within the given colonial boundaries and had to create a sense of nation among the diverse people within them. For the Somalis, however, the borders left by the colonial past enclosed an ethnically homogenous people, but these borders did not include all Somalis. Large numbers of ethnic Somalis remained in The Territory of the Issas and Affars (modern Djibouti), the Ogaden Region of Ethiopia, and the Northern Frontier District (NFD) in Kenya.

The unifying force for the Somalis was a sense of nationhood that created the national mission to expand and encompass all people who identified themselves as Somali. This irredentism (the desire to reunify the separated Somali lands and people) became the factor that held the Somali nation together despite "almost insurmountable internal divisions."³⁴ The Somali cultural homogeneity, the traditional conflict with the major Ethiopian ethnic groups (the Amharas and Gallas), and economic dependence on open borders would have been sufficient in themselves to generate a powerful irredentist sentiment. But it was the scattering of clan families and smaller lineage groups across surrounding international borders that intensified the irredentist sentiment among the Somalis.³⁵

The Somalis have an undisputable shared sense of nationhood. They are culturally uniform, speak a basic common language (there are numerous dialects), and enjoy a rich oral literature that is centered on poetic forms. Additionally, the Somali people organize their communal life around similar, egalitarian social institutions and emphasize a common genealogy back to an original Arab ancestor. However, prior to independence in 1960, the Somali people did not think or act as a political unit.³⁶

At independence, the Somalis embraced democracy with a passion and for the next nine years (until the 1969 coup) they were the model of democratic government in Africa. The Somalis regarded political involvement as the right of everyone to be heard and the level of political participation in the immediate post-independence era often surpassed that of many

western democracies. The Somali nomad's most cherished possession become his transistor radio which was required to keep up with political events.³⁷

Unfortunately, the Somalis operated within a somewhat "special" kind of democracy. Kinship bonds remained the basis of selection for government office. The inevitable struggle for jobs and funds for development in post-independence Somalia amplified these kinship bonds.³⁸ Political parties tended to be based on clan lines and the system of proportional representation built into the Somali constitution gave rise to a profusion of small political parties (for example, 60 parties, in a nation of five million people, participated in the March 1969 general election).³⁹ This made the system vulnerable to manipulation by the larger parties and resulted in increasing instability.⁴⁰ Nepotism and clan-based politics lead to corruption, charges of fraud and election rigging, and had a major impact on Somali democracy even prior to the 1969 coup.⁴¹

The historical and sociological dimension of the Somali culture "reinforced the natural tendency of democratic politics to prevent the articulation of a coherent policy for social transformation."⁴² These problems were amplified by the inevitable disillusion that followed independence. Somali irredentism, the desire to bring the Ogaden, Djibouti, and part of northern Kenya into a Greater Somaliland, was the only thing that held the country together in the immediate post-independence era. This pan-Somali nationalism became the unifying and legitimizing principle of the nation and every Somali leader after independence was judged on his willingness to pursue the goal of a "Greater Somaliland."⁴³

Due to these irredentist impulses, the new Somali state initially attempted to gain control of Kenya's Northern Frontier District (NFD). Over 60 percent of the population in the NFD was ethnically Somali and a 1962 British survey conducted in the NFD prior to Kenyan independence found that 62 percent of the population wanted to secede from Kenya and join the Somali Republic. Following the independence of Kenya in 1963, ethnic Somalis in the NFD began a revolt which was finally suppressed only in 1967. While the Somali Republic had

provided political support to the Somalis in the NFD, it was too poor to provide much material aid. ⁴⁴

Attempts to gain control of the other parts of the Somali "nation" were also not successful. The dispute with Ethiopia over the exact location of the Somali-Ethiopian border was inherited from the colonial era and armed clashes occurred along this border almost from the moment of Somalia's independence. These border clashes often involved intense combat and brought Somalia and Ethiopia to the verge of full scale war in 1961 and 1964, but Somalia was unable to add any of the Ogaden region to the Somali Republic. ⁴⁵

France's hold on Djibouti (then called the French Territory of the Issas and Afars, or FTIA) also ruled out a quick assimilation of ethnic Somalis and their territory, even though an estimated 50 to 60 percent of Djibouti's population was ethnic Somali. Some low-level political organization did take place, however, which resulted in an estimated 12,000 to 18,000 ethnic Somalis being expelled from Djibouti after Somali demonstrations for unification took place during President DeGaulle's visit in 1966. ⁴⁶

Consequently, by 1967 the Somali dream of a rapid incorporation of Greater Somaliland was seen to be out of reach. As a result, the Somali President and Prime Minister installed in 1967 (Abdirashid Ali Shermarke and Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, respectively) moved to appease the main enemies of the pan-Somali dream. Although they had little real choice in the matter - black African states repeatedly aligned themselves with President Kenyatta of Kenya and Emperor Selassie of Ethiopia and the Arab states were paralyzed by the 1967 war with Israel - the Somali President and Prime Minister were accused of "selling out." ⁴⁷ The change in the Somali government's plan for Greater Somaliland culminated in a state visit by Egal and Shermarke to Kenya in 1967 and a visit to Ethiopia by Egal in 1968. ⁴⁸

The Mohammed Siad Barre Era

The Somali experiment in democracy began to crumble with the 1967 election, even before the frustration of the pan-Somali dream and the conciliation with Kenya and Ethiopia. The

Somali Youth League (SYL - the main Somali nationalist organization and the most organized party, founded on 15 May 1943) emerged once again with a majority of the National Assembly seats, but the election was marked by pervasive fraud and intimidation.⁴⁹ The frustration and instability after the election continued to build and ultimately culminated in the 15 October 1969 assassination of Prime Minister Egal (while President Shermarke was out of the country) in a matter unrelated to politics. A 20 October 1969 attempt by the SYL to reform the government was not accepted by the political elite and before dawn on 21 October 1969 Mogadishu was under army control with Major General Mohammed Siad Barre, the commander of the Somali Armed Forces, in charge.⁵⁰

It is necessary to examine the Somali political culture more closely to properly understand the nature of the Somali democratic experiment as it existed at the time of the coup. I.M. Lewis has made the following comments on the nature of Somali competitive party elections during this era:

The democratic parliamentary system which had seemed to combine so well with traditional Somali institutions, and had begun with such verve and promise, had turned distinctly sour. The National Assembly was no longer the symbol of free speech and fair play for all citizens. On the contrary, it had been turned into a sordid marketplace where deputies traded their votes for personal rewards with scant regard for the interests of their constituents.⁵¹

The crisis in the Somali government was recognized by the Somali people and they initially welcomed the coup. The army and the police were trusted institutions in the country and the coup relieved the political and social tensions that had been building with the concern that the civilian government was unwilling or unable to face the problems of the country.⁵² These tensions had been building as a result of the great disappointment felt after it was realized that the post-independence era was not any better (and in a lot of areas even worse) than life under a colonial administration. In the words of Siad Barre himself: "there was absolutely no choice...the nation was politically fragmented and there was a real threat of anarchy."⁵³

The Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) was established immediately after the coup to serve as Somalia's governing body. This *junta*, composed of 21 army and police officers, declared its intent to implement the policies of scientific socialism within the Republic of Somalia.⁵⁴ The ultimate purpose of scientific socialism was to mobilize all Somalis for public works activities and to enlist the nation's students in a campaign to reduce illiteracy.⁵⁵ The substantive aspects of scientific socialism included the promotion of agricultural cooperatives and increased cultivation in the nation's farms, the nationalization of most of the very small Somali commercial sector, and the indoctrination of the population in the virtues of self-help, mutual cooperation, and loyalty to the nation and the regime.⁵⁶

During its early years, the Siad Barre regime constituted a top-down, socialist-oriented developmental dictatorship. In 1970, the SRC declared Somalia a socialist state and introduced sweeping political and social changes. All professional and political organizations were disbanded and dissent was not tolerated in any form (U.S. Peace Corps volunteers were ejected from Somalia three months after the coup).⁵⁷ Although the SRC voiced Marxist slogans from the beginning (tempered by realization of Somalia's Islamic culture), in 1974, Somalia became the first sub-Saharan African country to sign a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union.⁵⁸

The Barre regime also attempted to overcome the divisiveness of clan loyalties. "Tribalism," the identification with and actions of the various clans, was officially banned in 1971. Additionally, the collective payment of blood money (see the section on Cultural Aspects in this chapter) was outlawed and the country itself was divided into new provinces that cut across traditional clan boundaries.⁵⁹ In a 1971 interview, Siad Barre stated "we are devoting all our energies toward destroying all forms of national disunity including tribalism and elitism."⁶⁰

The SRC's initial achievements were impressive and even took the rougher edge off the nation's poverty. Under the SRC's programs, the amount of cultivated acreage was greatly

expanded, primary school enrollment increased 100% from 1970 to 1971, and the incidence of malaria, tuberculosis, and other endemic diseases was sharply reduced.⁶¹

However, the darker side of Siad Barre's regime was also apparent early in the reign of the SRC. Some of the less benign of the *junta's* programs included the formation of the National Security Service under Colonel Ahmed Suleiman Abdulla, Siad Barre's son-in-law, to oversee the regime's internal security.⁶² The *junta* also established the "Victory Pioneers," led by Abdiraham "Gulwade," another Siad Barre son-in-law. The Victory Pioneers had the mission to mobilize the population for compulsory speeches in self-help at local "orientation" centers - propaganda centers established at neighborhood level in order to encourage "revolutionary" and pro-government attitudes. The Victory Pioneers had the task of enforcing participation of the people at the orientation centers⁶³ as well as monitoring the activities of foreigners in the country (especially those who came in contact with Somalis).⁶⁴ Over time, the activities of the Victory Pioneers became more and more oppressive to the point where have been compared to Haiti's Tonton Macoutes and their associated terrorization of the population.⁶⁵

The SRC also instituted a broad range of extra-legal forms of repression based on "national security" concerns. For example, the Law for Safeguarding National Security (Law Number 54) was put into effect on 10 September 1970. This law included the penalty of death or life in prison for "dissident" activities with no right of appeal or even for the accused to know the charges. This law essentially made it clear that any criticism of the regime was an act of treason.⁶⁶ Additionally, Habeas Corpus was abolished by Law Number 64 on 10 October 1970. Siad Barre even consolidated power over the court system with the regime's body of national security legislation reinforced by the National Security Court (NSC). Established in 1970, the NSC judges were personally appointed by Siad Barre, who remained closely involved in major trials.⁶⁷

As a result of Siad Barre's policies and rhetoric (an atmosphere that has been compared to the anti-intellectual era of Pol Pot's regime in Cambodia), Somali intellectuals left the country, resulting in the loss of a critical national resource.⁶⁸ However, the regime did retain some

popularity among the people as the emphasis on self-reliance was popular among Somalis. Additionally, the initial reform efforts were concentrated on the settled population (an estimated 30 to 35% of the population) and were especially felt by Somali urban dwellers. The rural population was generally not affected until the late 1970's and into the 1980's when the government began to implement its counter-insurgency tactics. Tom J. Farer, a noted student of the Horn of Africa, has stated that "had Siad Barre attempted to extend the secular revolution to the mass of fiercely independent traditionalists out in the bush, he probably would have encountered fierce resistance." ⁶⁹

The Siad Barre regime was finally able to extend its control over the Somali nomads with the assistance of a natural disaster: the drought of 1974-1975. By 1975, the drought had destroyed the basis for life on the Ogaden plains and the adjoining Somali territory and 250,000 nomads were drawn into refugee camps. ⁷⁰ The effects of the drought were exacerbated by the progressive overgrazing of the Ogaden plains. As a result, the cattle and camel herds that were the basis of the nomadic life were decimated beyond hope of renewal without massive external assistance.

This assistance was provided by the Soviet Union. 100,000 nomads were resettled in agricultural settlements in the south of the country while 20,000 more were settled along the coast in an attempt to develop a fisheries industry. The remainder of the refugees had their herds restocked and returned to their traditional nomadic life ⁷¹ (note: the failure of the Somalis to establish a fisheries industry, perhaps the one "natural resource" the Somalis have, deserves more attention. Although the Somali Indian Ocean coast is virtually legendary in the types and quantities of fish available, the Somalis have an aversion towards eating fish. The development of a fisheries industry may be one of the few sources of income for the post-civil war Somalis.).

It was also not until the 1975 - 1976 period that Siad Barre began to consolidate his personal rule and transform Somalia into an autocratic regime. In Somalia, governance became "more a matter of seamanship and less of navigation - that is, staying afloat rather than going

somewhere." ⁷² Despite the trappings of a constitutional government, Siad Barre remained the supreme ruler. Some changes were made to the facade of the regime when the SRC was replaced by the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) in July 1976 under Soviet tutelage. ⁷³ But like its predecessor the SRC, the SRSP lacked grassroots support and there was no effective popular participation in the government. Another change was made when a new constitution was promulgated in August 1979. This constitution provided for an elected legislative assembly, the People's Assembly, but the assembly was in reality nothing more than a rubber-stamp organization under party control. ⁷⁴

The Somali military remained a large part of the country's political culture, despite attempts to give the appearance of replacing military rule with civilian rule, and Somali civil institutions continued to be headed and run by former military and police officers. ⁷⁵ Additionally, clan-based alignments also retained their importance in Siad Barre's government. The steep pyramidal shape of the government simply could not permit a balanced representation of all the clans. ⁷⁶

Despite attempts to overcome clan consciousness, Siad Barre relied on members of the Darod clan-family, with the Marehan, Ogaden, and Dulbahante clans representing the inner circle of power. ⁷⁷ This alignment of Siad Barre's support was known by the acronym "MOD." The significance of these groups is as follows: the Marehan was Siad Barre's own clan, the Ogaden was his mother's clan, and the Dulbahante was the clan of one of Siad Barre's son-in-laws (who was also the chief of the National Security Service). The "MOD" alignment provided Siad Barre's base of support and, in return, members of these clans received the preponderance and government positions and business (not insignificant in a socialist country).

The Ogaden War of 1977 - 1978

The Ogaden War between Somalia and Ethiopia became the watershed event in recent Somali history: "in retrospect, as in prospect, the Ogaden war appeared almost inevitable, a matter of destiny beyond human control." ⁷⁸

Relations between Somalia and Ethiopia began to go bad again in 1973 when a U.S. company, Tenneco, discovered natural gas deposits in the Ogaden area only 30 miles on the Ethiopian side of the Somali-Ethiopian border (exploration on the Somali side found no gas). This event was significant for the resource-poor Somalis and the fact that the gas was located in what the Somalis considered a disputed area reawoke the Greater Somaliland ideal. As a result, the Somalis conducted a limited military probe toward the gas site in 1974 which was beaten back by the Ethiopian army. The renewed Somali interest in the Ogaden alarmed Haile Sellassie, however, and he unsuccessfully tried to get increased aid from the United States.⁷⁹

The impetus for the attempt of a full-scale military movement into the Ogaden had its genesis in the historical environment of 1977 - 1978. Specifically, five circumstances revealed that this time could possibly be the best chance the Somalis would have to bring the Ogaden into Greater Somaliland: the after-effect of the coup that overthrew Emperor Haile Sellassie in 1974 and replaced him with the Marxist Dergue; the Dergue's struggle with the renewed anti-Ethiopian insurgency in Eritrea; the relative superiority of the Somali military over their Ethiopian adversaries, especially in the type and quantity of equipment; that fact that the Somalis sensed that the U.S. was not prepared for a massive involvement in the Horn of Africa, especially after America's recent experience in Vietnam (as it was, relations remained strained between the U.S. and the new Ethiopian government and the United States had cut off aid to Ethiopia in February 1977 for human rights abuses);⁸⁰ and the Somali calculation of the Soviet reaction.

The Soviets had displayed sympathy with the Dergue's Marxist rhetoric and revolutionary program as early as 1975⁸¹ and had provided 385 million dollars to the Dergue in December 1976. The Somalis calculated that the Soviets would not try to stop the Somali movement into the Ogaden, but would probably try to control it through rationing spare parts and ammunition (the Soviets operated the Somali military's logistic system).⁸² The Soviets had appeared interested in establishing a Marxist Red Sea Federation and had Cuba's Fidel Castro convene a secret summit conference in March 1977 at Aden in the People's Democratic Republic

of Yemen (PDRY) that included the PDRY, Somalia, and Ethiopia. At this conference, the Soviets offered economic support - an important element for both Somalia and Ethiopia which were trying to manage social and economic transformation with very scarce resources.⁸³

The exact starting date of the Ogaden war is very difficult to determine. For several years prior to full-scale war breaking out, the Siad Barre regime had supported the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), a guerilla insurgency made up of ethnic Somalis in the Ogaden region. It was not until April 1977 that the world had unrefutable evidence that major regular Somali forces were fighting as well. Although the Somalis initially made good progress in the war, the Soviets quickly closed the military supply pipeline to Somalia and conducted a massive airlift and sealift of military equipment to Ethiopia that ultimately delivered 1 to 1.5 billion dollars worth of military supplies and equipment to Ethiopia between May 1977 and March 1978. In addition, thousands of Cuban troops were brought into Ethiopia.⁸⁴ The Ethiopian's had regained enough strength to counter-attack (with Cuban combat formations assisting) in mid-February 1978 and by March 1978, the Somali government announced it was withdrawing all of its forces from Ethiopian territory. For its part, on 13 November 1977 Somalia broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba, and abrogated the treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union, withdrawing all military facilities and expelling the 6,000 Soviet military personnel in the country.⁸⁵

There was apparently no major Soviet plot in changing support from Somali to Ethiopia. Like the U.S., the Soviet Union considered Ethiopia more attractive than Somalia (see Chapter 4). Especially significant were the facts that Ethiopia had a large population with an ability to be agriculturally self-sufficient, had no Muslim problems, and the Soviets could possibly establish military facilities in Eritrea on the Red Sea. The Soviets did not hesitate when faced with a choice between continued support of Somalia or changing their base of operations in the Horn to Ethiopia.⁸⁶

Beginning of the Somali Civil War

We couldn't believe that taxes paid by the Somali people, the weapons bought to defend the people and the army, created and trained to defend the nation, were now being used against the people. Who could believe that planes belonging the Somali army would take off from Hargeisa airport to bomb Hargeisa itself and its population?

Hassan Ismail
Interview with Africa Watch
Cardiff (Wales), 8 July 1989 ⁸⁷

The Ogaden War against Ethiopia was an immensely popular national issue that brought the government and the people together in the common purpose of pan-Somalism. The Somali defeat resulted in great frustration. Siad Barre attempted to deflect criticism of the conduct of the war by stifling political activity even further as every challenge was met by fierce retaliation.

The first to suffer was the army itself. Almost before the war had ended, 80 officers were executed in Hargeisa for opposing the handling of the war. This was followed by a 9 April 1978 coup attempt led by officers of the Majerteen clan. Siad Barre's subsequent suppression of the Majerteen compelled that clan to form the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) in defense. The SSDF was the first large scale movement against the Siad Barre regime and conducted a guerilla campaign against the Somali government from 1978 until it reached a political settlement with Siad Barre in 1981. ⁸⁸

However, one of the most serious consequences of the Ogaden War was the huge influx of ethnic Somali refugees into northern Somalia as Ethiopian forces regained the Ogaden. The Somali government estimated the number of refugees as 800,000 while international relief agencies put the number closer to 500,000. This disparity is generally understood as the Somali government's attempt to get as much financial assistance as possible from relief agencies. ⁸⁹

The preponderance of these refugees were from the Ogadeni clan, the clan of Siad Barre's mother and one of the favored clans in the regime. The Somali government created paramilitary groups among the refugees and encouraged the creation of armed militia groups

among other members of the Darod clan-family as well.⁹⁰ The Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) was the most significant of these armed militias. The WSLF was ostensibly organized to conduct guerilla war against the Ethiopian forces in the Ogaden, but in fact it was used to terrorize the Isaaq civilian population in the border region between Somalia and Ethiopia.⁹¹

As a result of the relocation of the Ogadeni refugees in the north, the Isaaq and Ogadeni people competed for the same scarce agricultural and grazing land. The presence of armed Ogadeni refugees in Isaaq territory only increased the tension (The Ogadenis and the Isaaq Idagala subclan have an enmity against each other that goes far back into history).⁹² Additionally, widespread discrimination on the part of the Somali government openly favored the Ogadeni. As a result, the Ogadeni refugees were better off than the local population and the political power of the Isaaq receded in their own historical territory.⁹³ In response, the Isaaqs formed the Somali National Movement (SNM) in April 1981 in order to defend themselves. Suspecting every Isaaq of supporting the SNM, the Somali government unleashed a reign of terror and lawlessness in northern Somalia.

The politically explosive situation in northern Somalia was triggered by the arrest (in December 1981) and trial (in February 1982) of the Hargeisa Group - 30 Isaaq professionals who had organized a self-help program to improve local facilities (recall that the Siad Barre regime permitted no independent political or professional activities).⁹⁴ After this, the Isaaq saw that neither independent institutions or political opposition would be tolerated and an increasing number of Isaaq began to believe that armed conflict would be the only hope of defeating the government.⁹⁵

Further pushing the Isaaq towards open rebellion, the Siad Barre government attempted to consolidate its power in the north by placing all significant military, judicial, and security positions (to include the removal of Isaaqs from the military), under the control of pro-government, non-Isaaqs. This program resulted in a complete division of "them" against "us" in northern Somalia.⁹⁶

As the suppression of the northern Isaacs expanded, even the Isaaq nomads, who had no history of a relationship with any central government, were targeted by the Somali government. The nomads were seen as the economic power base behind the SNM and were brutally harassed by a variety of means to include the unrestricted use of land mines in the countryside.⁹⁷ Additionally, herds of domestic animals were machine-gunned and wells were poisoned in order to destroy the nomads basis of life.⁹⁸

Another aspect of the difficulties after the Ogaden War that must be considered was the structural adjustment Somali had to undergo in 1981 in order to secure further loans from the World Bank. Corruption in the Somali public sector was virtually legalized due to the impact of the restructuring agreement. The incomes of government workers were fixed and virtually eliminated due to hyperinflation. Consequently, the bureaucratic and technocratic capability of the state fell apart as each government employee was virtually forced to program bribes and kickbacks in their operations in order to merely feed their families. This caused even further turmoil within Somali society as competition increased in the attempt of each group to control public resources and foreign loans. This process of ingrained corruption became a major contributing factor to the decay and disintegration of Somali public institutions.⁹⁹

In 1982, the Siad Barre government expanded its extra-judicial powers even further through the creation of the Mobile Military Court (known by the colloquial name of "Guilty or Innocent, You Will Be Found Guilty"). The judges of the Mobile Military Court were all serving military officers and they had the authority to conduct extra-judicial executions. Anyone who was politically active was subject to be taken before the Mobile Military Court and executed. The term "mobile" is literal - the court was mounted on vehicles which could rapidly travel about country dispensing justice. On the government's part, all Isaaq were considered the enemy and these extra-judicial killings galvanized the Isaaq's opposition to the government.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, the threat of violence began to eat at the Somali social fabric as people were encouraged to report on each other in order to avoid punishment.

The most repulsive of these techniques was the "*tabeleh*" system (*tabeleh* is Somali for "leader"). Under this system, a *tabeleh* (usually a member of the SRSP who worked closely with the NSS) was appointed for every 20 homes. The *tabeleh* system was combined with a continually expanding curfew system which was imposed on northern Somalia. This curfew originally ran from dusk to dawn, but it soon expanded to include a large part of daylight hours as well. Anytime during the curfew period, the *tabeleh* could demand to see all members of any household. If a member was missing, the government would assume he or she was conducting guerilla activities against the government and the remaining members of the household could be tortured for information. Rape was also widely practiced by the security forces to shame the male members of a society which based a man's standing in the community on the protection he provided for his women.¹⁰¹ This system was both socially and psychologically divisive for the Somali community as it forced neighbors to report on each other.¹⁰² The *tabeleh* system is yet another example of the destruction of the Somali society that took place under the reign of the Siad Barre regime.

It is not the brutality of the government repression that is significant to this study, but the deliberate destruction of the Somali social fabric. In operating the system of "Isaaq Extermination," within which local officials competed for the most hard-line policies, the government destroyed the cultural values of the society as well as mutual trust and confidence.¹⁰³ It was the Somali government's own policies of deliberately manipulating the clan system and exacerbating differences that has reinforced the organization of opposition groups along clan-based lines.¹⁰⁴

Perhaps most invidious of all was the deliberate undermining of the standing of the Somali elders. Although Siad Barre had begun a program to replace the elders with government appointed leadership in the early 1970's, the program had its greatest effect during the suppression of Somali opposition groups that began in 1981. The undermining of the moral stature, social standing, and political slant of the elders was the government's way of destroying the cohesion of

the community. It was nothing less than a deliberate program to compromise the community's traditional social fabric. The elders were frightened into political acquiescence not through threats to them, but through the summary trials and executions of their relatives.

Although the Somali government had waged a counter-insurgency against the Isaaq-based SNM since 1981, full-scale civil war did not erupt until 1988. On 3 April 1988, the governments of Somalia and Ethiopia signed a treaty in which the Somali government renounced the historical Somali claims to the Ogaden. This treaty destroyed the basis for Somali solidarity - the irredentist aspirations for a Greater Somaliland. Basically, Siad Barre had ruined the very idea of Somali nationalism in order to conserve his regime's resources to crush internal challenges.¹⁰⁵

This treaty also included the provision for the Ethiopians to expel the SNM from Ethiopia. When the SNM recognized it was about to be forced out of its sanctuaries in Ethiopia, it decided to launch a full scale attack on Siad Barre's forces in northern Somalia on its own terms. As a result, open warfare broke out in northern Somalia on 27 May 1988 when the SNM launched attacks against Burao, one of the main northern towns, and on 31 May 1988 against Hargeisa, the provincial capital and second largest city in Somalia. During the next 19 months of civil war, an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 people in northern Somalia were systematically killed by the Somali government.¹⁰⁶

In conducting the suppression of the Isaaq revolt in northern Somalia in 1988, the Somali government armed any non-Isaaq civilian they could find to fight the SNM in a fierce bloodletting in which neighbor preyed upon neighbor. In some areas, the government relied almost exclusively on armed refugees to conduct the fight against the Isaaq.¹⁰⁷ In the vicious fighting in and around Hargeisa, at least 70 percent of the city was damaged or destroyed. It was due to the violent nature of the suppression of the Issaq that a belief developed among the Somali people that, regardless of clan affiliation, change had to be brought about and Siad Barre had to go.¹⁰⁸

The methods used by the Somali government to suppress the Isaaq insurgency were developed during the 1978 - 1981 counter-insurgency waged against the Majerteen-based Somali Democratic Salvation Front (SDSF) who had also risen up against the autocratic rule of Siad Barre. The troubling consequence of the methods employed by Siad Barre's forces to suppress these insurrections resulted in the "destruction of social values that underpinned a whole way of life. Particularly damaging is the demise of Somalia's fragile clan structure." ¹⁰⁹ According to one Somali refugee interviewed by Africa Watch in 1989, under the regime of Siad Barre clan loyalty "literally become a matter of life and death, both for the individual and the group." ¹¹⁰

Under the clan manipulation waged by Siad Barre's government, clans turned into the means for political domination and a tool for exploiting the targeted clans (it is the legacy of this clan-on-clan manipulation that will make a political settlement in Somalia very difficult). By mid-1989, civil war had broken out across the entire country. Riots in Mogadishu between 14 - 16 July 1989 and the rebellion of the Ogaden clansmen in the south was due more to the political disintegration of the regime than to any other cause. ¹¹¹

The Mogadishu riots provide a snapshot of the workings of the Siad Barre regime in the late 1980's. After the mysterious death of the Papal Nuncio, Salvatore Colombo, the Siad Barre regime rounded up several respected Islamic clergy as suspects. This set off several days of riots in which an estimated 1,048 people were killed, at least 144 of which were dragged from their homes and summarily executed during the night of 16 July 1989. ¹¹² Another example of the disintegration of the regime includes an episode when Siad Barre attended a soccer match in Mogadishu on 6 July 1990, hoping to demonstrate that he was not afraid to appear in public. Instead, he was pelted and booed by the crowd. His bodyguards reacted by firing indiscriminately into the crowd, killing 65 people. ¹¹³

The existence of clan conflicts and rivalries have been a constant feature of Somali society and this loyalty to clans often undercuts the sense of shared nationhood. While this sense of Somali nationhood has provided solidarity against external threats, clan allegiances become a

source of antagonism once the threat is gone. Clan areas are generally associated with the territory defined by the historical circuit of nomadic migration, but they have no specific boundaries.¹¹⁴

It was ultimately this clan rivalry that precipitated Siad Barre's demise set the conditions for the subsequent anarchy in Somalia.¹¹⁵ Due to the unresponsive Siad Barre government, guerilla war became the only effective way of making the government accountable to the people. The basic causes of the civil war in Somalia were: clan rivalries; nepotism; corruption in high places; uneven distribution of the very limited natural resources; and Siad Barre's centralized and dictatorial rule.¹¹⁶ In its desperate fight for survival, Siad Barre's family and clansmen sought to exploit the segmentary lineage rivalry within the Somali nation by playing sub-clans and lineages against each other in a complex cycle of violence.¹¹⁷

The failure of the socialist economic experiment, the impact of vast refugee flows (which cost the government approximately \$120 million annually to support and caused considerable distortion of the Somali economy),¹¹⁸ and the natural cycle of droughts, put great strain on Somalia. Increasingly troubled, Barre courted sheikhs and elders and played clan off against clan.¹¹⁹ The relationship between economic prosperity and political stability was demonstrated as Siad Barre's power to manipulate clans waned as Somali economic problems increased.¹²⁰ All these problems were topped off by the widespread perception that Siad Barre lacked the capability and vision to resolve Somalia's crises.

In the end, Siad Barre's use of force to suppress his opponents did not suppress the rebellion - it only widened the civil war.¹²¹ By mid-1990, the collapse of anything remotely like legitimate authority left a vacuum which was filled by men with guns. So much of the country was in rebellion that Barre was derisively referred to as the "Mayor of Mogadishu."¹²² Siad Barre realized too late that a compromise would be necessary and he abruptly dissolved the government and formed a new one on 3 September 1990 with an Isaaq, Mohammed Hawadle Madar, as premier. The new government was not accepted, however, and the fighting intensified.¹²³

Fall of Siad Barre

Most of the opposition organizations were unstable, characterized by shifting membership and allegiances. These alliances were prone to often rupture and then regroup with subclans splitting from one group to make a deal with another. Most of the groups' ideological positions remained vague beyond the removal of the Siad Barre regime and the groups operated on a pragmatic, if not Machiavellian, basis. Some groups appealed to "primordial ties" that more often served as a basis for division instead of unity. It was these divisions that prevented any great degree of cooperation between the groups. ¹²⁴

Alliances between the opposition groups were also very loose. In August 1990, the SNM, the Somalia Patriotic Movement (SPM), and the United Somali Congress (USC) agreed to coordinate their efforts to overthrow Siad Barre, but the only objective they could agree on was to remove Siad Barre from power. ¹²⁵ The real difficulty began when the Siad Barre regime fell much earlier than expected. This was triggered by infighting between the Abgal and Habr Gedir clans (both members of the Hawiye clan-family as well as the USC) in Mogadishu. An attempt by Siad Barre's forces to take advantage of this fighting and eliminate the USC set off a popular uprising and Siad Barre and his remaining supporters were forced to flee from Mogadishu on 19 January 1991. ¹²⁶

Siad Barre's early defeat resulted in accelerating the disintegration of Somalia. As mentioned above, the opposition forces had only one thing in common: to defeat Siad Barre. After Siad Barre was overthrown, power was immediately assumed by the USC (a Hawiye organization). Despite the formation of a national salvation committee between the USC with the SPM, Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), and the Somali Democratic Alliance (SDA) on 23 January 1991 there was great resentment among the other opposition organizations since the Hawiye (USC) had played a very minor role in the anti-Barre struggle until just a few months earlier. ¹²⁷

The USC's initial mistake was to install an interim administration, headed by Ali Mahdi, on 29 January, a few days after the rebel take-over of Mogadishu and before proper consultation could take place between the USC and Somalia's other armed political movements in accordance with the August 1990 agreement.¹²⁸ The SNM, which had bore the brunt of Siad Barre's regime, remained aloof from the national salvation committee in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Siad Barre. The SNM had little interest in being involved in the governing of all of Somalia and was already displaying secessionist tendencies (it would announce it was forming an independent country in April 1991). As a result, after Siad Barre there was no government, only opposition.¹²⁹

Post-Barre Developments

The initial post-Barre conflict concentrated largely upon issues of territory and power. Placing these issues of clan conflict in broader perspective, the irony of the clan power struggles is that the clan groupings were not fighting over ideology, religion, values, or any other substantial thing. They were primarily fighting over power.¹³⁰

Nowhere has this been illustrated more clearly than in Mogadishu itself and the internecine warfare that has been conducted between Mohammed Farah Aidid's Habr Gidir subclan and Ali Mahdi's Abgal subclan (both subclans belong the Hawiye clan). There has been no history of interclan fighting within the Hawiye clan, nor is there any traditional enmity between the two subclans. The current rivalry between the two results from the way in which first Siad Barre and then the two USC leaders have sought to manipulate clan loyalty in order to secure a political power base. This legacy of newly manufactured ethnic tension is one of the most damaging political developments in contemporary Somalia.¹³¹

A peace conference was held in Djibouti in July 1991 which was attended by six of the Somali groups. During this conference it was agreed that a new interim government would be established in Mogadishu to run the country for a two-year period under the old 1960 constitution until free elections could be held. Ali Mahdi (a Hawiye) was confirmed as interim president while Omar Arsh Ghalib (an Isaaq) was reappointed as prime minister. However, before Ghalib could

name his government, fighting broke out in Mogadishu between rival Hawiye factions.¹³² A joint report by Africa Watch and Physicians for Human Rights estimated that 14,000 people were killed and 27,000 wounded in Mogadishu between November 1991 and March 1992 as Ali Mahdi and Aidid battled for control of the city, with an estimated 70 to 100 people killed by gunfire daily.¹³³

The fighting was triggered on 17 November 1991 when Aidid forces refused to allow a plane carrying an official Italian delegation (led by Italy's deputy minister for foreign affairs) to land at Mogadishu Airport. This delegation's mission was to discuss with Ali Mahdi and his government how Italy could help in Somalia's rehabilitation. Aidid's objective was to make sure Ali Mahdi did not consolidate his power. Ali Mahdi, in turn, had to move against Aidid if his government was to maintain any semblance of credibility.¹³⁴

The fighting in Mogadishu allowed Siad Barre to make a second attempt to come back to power (he had made one earlier attempt in February and March 1991). He built up a force estimated at approximately 5,000 men in and around his home town of Gabahurrey, while Aidid and Mahdi fought in Mogadishu. By 17 April 1992, this force was within 30 kilometers of Mogadishu. This provoked a battle led by Aidid, supported by the neutral Hawadle and Murosade subclans, and even by Ali Mahdi's supporters. By 29 April, Siad Barre's forces had been defeated and forced back onto the Kenyan border area.¹³⁵ After this defeat, Siad Barre sought refuge in Nairobi, Kenya where he stayed for two weeks until President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria (then also serving as chairman of the OAU) offered temporary asylum in Nigeria.¹³⁶ Barre's second defeat was aided by a split within the Darod itself when Colonel Ahmed Omer Jess, leader of the Ogaden clan (the predominant clan around Kismayu), resurrected the SPM (which had fought against Siad Barre for two years previously) and broke ranks with General Mohammed Hersi Morgan's Majerteen clan (predominant within Kismayu itself).¹³⁷

The pastoral Somali clans have borne the brunt of the post-Siad Barre fighting. The Digil and Rahanweyn, the traditional farmers of Somalia, were defenseless as were the non-ethnic

Somali Bantu tribes who farm along the banks of the Juba and Shabeelle Rivers. The Digil and Rahanweyn have a dialect that is different than the main Somali language and have always been prey to the warlike Marehan who live on the Kenyan-Somali border.

In the post-Siad Barre turmoil, the Rahanweyn hastily formed their own political organization, the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM), to protect themselves and assert their political rights. The USC provided some weapons and training to the SDM, but the SDM was badly defeated by the Marehan forces, most of whom were former soldiers. As a result, the victorious Marehan took retaliatory measures against the Rahanweyn, indiscriminately killing them and looting their grain and livestock. Consequently, the cities of Baidoa and Bardera became "cities of death" and the epicenters of the famine. A former Somali diplomat has stated that without the U.S.-led intervention, the Rahanweyn, as well as the Digil and the Somalis of Bantu origin, would have become virtually extinct. As it was, the bulk of the 1992 famine victims were from these three groups.¹³⁸

Since 1991, the largely ungovernable Somali society has looked much like the one described by the 17th-century philosopher Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes argued that human action was motivated entirely by selfish concerns, which would lead in turn lead to a "war of all against all." Hobbes also argued that the fundamental need of human nature was an individual's desire for security, and that this in turn was inseparable from the desire for power.¹³⁹ In the words of one student of the region, "The situation in Somalia cries out for a Hobbesian Leviathan: some form of political authority that can guarantee peace, order, and security."¹⁴⁰ By the time of the U.S.-led intervention, Somalia was clearly divided along traditional lines. The pan-Somali idea founded on a cultural identity rather than political unity was shattered.¹⁴¹

Economic Aspects

As Samuel M. Makinda has noted, "economic factors play a significant role in national security. A nation's political stability cannot be assured without a sound economy."¹⁴² In

Somalia, as in other developing countries, economic misery and political problems are intertwined to the extent that they cannot be logically separated.

Even before the latest disaster, Somalia was one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita income estimated at \$170 (1989).¹⁴³ The Somali economy has been so badly disrupted by the continuing conflict, however, that it is only possible to discuss it in terms of its past and its potential. By 1992, Somalia's overall economic climate was being described as "economic destitution."¹⁴⁴

As noted above, the Somali Republic began its history with a very weak economic base. At independence, the country was in a situation of extreme poverty in most areas to include technology, education, health, nutrition, infrastructure, industrial plant and equipment.¹⁴⁵ While bananas and cattle were the country's major exports, the foreign exchange generated was not enough to maintain the country's infrastructure and satisfy the existing consumer demand, much less enough to allow for military and economic development.¹⁴⁶

Somalia's development after independence was also very disappointing. The attempt at scientific socialism by the Siad Barre regime was mismanaged as well as inappropriate to the Somali culture. Somalia's economic growth failed to keep pace with the rise in the country's population (which has expanded in part due to the influx of refugees) and real GNP growth grew at a rate of 1.7 percent per year between 1980 and 1989, real GNP per person decreased by 1.3 percent per year.¹⁴⁷

Prior to the civil war, most Somalis were pastoralists and approximately 45 percent of the land was used for pasture. The economy is traditionally based, principally on the herding of camels, goats, sheep, and cattle which, prior to the 1991-1992 famine, still provided for the subsistence need of about 75 percent of the population. Camel herds were the formal basis for Somali culture, diet, trade, and transportation, especially in the northwest part of the country. Livestock had been the major source of revenue for the country prior to the current crisis. Exports of livestock products rose steadily after the 1969 coup, achieving 80 percent of Somalia's export

earnings in 1982. This source of trade virtually evaporated, however, when Saudi Arabia (the major customer by far) suspended imports of Somali livestock products in 1983 due to concern over alleged infestation of Somali animals. This action severely damaged the entire Somali economy. In 1989, livestock accounted for approximately 49 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and approximately 65 percent of export earnings.¹⁴⁸ In 1988, before the outbreak of open civil war, the Somali livestock population was estimated at 20 million goats, 13.5 million sheep, 6.68 million camels, and 5 million cattle.¹⁴⁹

After livestock, bananas have been Somalia's second most important export. However, the Somali banana industry was never really competitive in the world market. The Italians provided a guaranteed market for all banana production, paid artificially high prices, and allowed Somali bananas to enter the Italian market without any import tax in order to sustain this part of the Somali economy. The banana plantations along the Juba River were still operating prior to the fall of the Siad Barre regime and banana production was estimated at 120,000 metric tons in 1988.¹⁵⁰

Less than two-percent of Somali land is arable and, prior to the current crisis, 20 percent of the population were farmers. As mentioned above, the main export crop was bananas, but sugar cane, sorghum, and corn were grown for the domestic market. Agricultural development from 1970 to 1984 was extremely poor. This has been attributed to the neglect of what had been the backbone of the Somali farming society - the small and medium-size private farmer - in favor of agricultural crash programs modeled after Soviet state farms. The objective of the agricultural crash programs was for the Somalis to achieve agricultural self-sufficiency by 1980, but instead per capita food production declined during those years by 3 percent per year.¹⁵¹

The Somali agricultural sector revived after 1985, given fresh impetus by the Ethiopian famine of 1984 - 1985. Even though crop production only generated approximately 10 percent of Somalia's GDP, prior to 1992 Somalia was usually self-sufficient in sorghum and corn (producing 250,000 metric tons of sorghum and 220,000 metric tons of corn in 1991) and imports of these staples

were only required during drought years.¹⁵² Somalia did have to import almost all of its rice and wheat, however. This amounted to approximately 80,000 metric tons of rice and 75,000 metric tons of wheat in 1991.

Major droughts have historically struck Somalia every three to five years, but the frequency has increased over the past decade. Resulting famines have become more devastating because of overgrazing of marginal lands and forced migration of hundreds of thousands of people due to the civil war and accompanying disorder.¹⁵³ The Somali environment as it exists today has been greatly stressed due to deforestation (due to the foraging for firewood), overgrazing, soil erosion and desertification.¹⁵⁴

As far as natural resources are concerned, Somalia possesses no economically profitable minerals that have often provided at least a limited source of revenue for many other former colonial countries. Mineral deposits in Somalia include uranium (in the Juba River valley) and largely unexploited reserves of iron ore, tin, gypsum, bauxite, copper and salt.¹⁵⁵ As noted above, there have been natural gas fields discovered in the Ogaden on the Ethiopian side of the border, but no gas has been found on the Somali side. Limited oil deposits were discovered in the Ogaden in 1986, but once again these deposits are on the Ethiopian side of the border.¹⁵⁶ Although there are geological indications that oil deposits should be found on the Somali side of the border, and several firms hold exploration and drilling licenses for oil, no oil has been found in Somalia yet.¹⁵⁷ Oil exploration has not yet been conducted off of Somalia's Indian Ocean Coast (note: Mobil Corporation and a Shell subsidiary were to begin exploring this region in 1990, but this was postponed due to the intensifying civil war).¹⁵⁸

Industry in Somalia was basically small in scale and based mostly on processing agricultural products: meat and fish processing, textiles and leather goods. The textile factory at Balad underwent large scale expansion in the late-1970's which made it one of the best-equipped textile factories in Africa. By November 1984, however, major rehabilitation was needed and by

1985 output had fallen to just 30 percent of capacity (Somalia has a small cotton production sector, producing approximately 7,000 tons per year). ¹⁵⁹

Attempts to develop an industrial sector outside of agricultural products were not successful. The Siad Barre regime initiated a number of ambitious industrial projects under state control, but these projects failed due to poor management, as well as a general lack of confidence in Somalia's economic and political future among private investors, ¹⁶⁰ and Barre was forced to realize there was no quick fix for Somalia's economic problems. ¹⁶¹ For example, a pharmaceuticals factory completed in 1984 with Italian aid has never entered production due to a lack of trained and skilled labor.

Overall, industry provided only 8.6 percent of Somalia's GDP in 1988. ¹⁶² Although the level of industrial production had been increasing prior to the civil war, the fact remains that due to the damage caused during the civil war, the post-Siad Barre turmoil, and the subsequent full-scale looting, Somali industry is literally non-existent and will have to be rebuilt from the ground up. The same can be said for Somalia's large-scale agricultural projects. These facilities became attractive, easy targets during the civil war and were thoroughly looted. ¹⁶³

Although Somalia's formal economy had been in a crisis since at least 1973, outside the formal sector it remained vibrant and healthy until the late 1980's. In terms of national income, there is no doubt that a major contribution was made by Somali workers overseas (mostly in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states) who sent approximately \$400 million per year back to Somalia. ¹⁶⁴ The economist Vali Jamal has calculated that two-thirds of urban Somali income originated from Somalis working outside the country, an amount equivalent to about 40 percent of Somalia's formal GNP. Jamal's calculations suggest that Somalia's 1982 per capita GNP was over \$400 - higher than the official figure for Kenya (which is often pointed out as an economic success story in Africa). ¹⁶⁵

This wealth (relatively speaking) should have provided Somalia with a source of funds for development. Unfortunately, it contributed to the disaster. A small elite benefitted greatly

from this booming hidden economy, while most others did not. This elite engaged in non-legal and unsustainable commercial activities. When harder times came, with recession, drought, and cut-off in foreign aid, they could only preserve their income by resorting to corrupt and violent practices.¹⁶⁶

One of the most important illicit activities was cattle smuggling to Kenya. This became particularly important when Saudi Arabia banned the import of cattle from Somalia in 1983 due to unfounded fears of the cattle disease of rinderpest. During 1987 and 1988, unofficial cattle exports to Kenya were estimated at about 50,000 head of cattle - a level six times as high as official exports through Kismayo port (the principle cattle exporting site). Competition between the Maxamad Zubeer subclan of the Ogaden clan and the Harte of Kismayo was particularly intense, laying the foundation for the violence between these groups in 1992 - 93.¹⁶⁷

The development funds and foreign loans that Somalia always required began to dry up in the late 1980's with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) declaring Somalia ineligible for further loans in May 1988. By 1990, the external debt service officially consumed more than 50 percent of Somalia's export earnings,¹⁶⁸ however, some observers have placed the figure as much higher.¹⁶⁹ By July 1990, Somalia's banking system had collapsed and inflation was running at nearly 600 percent a year.¹⁷⁰ The fact remains that since 1978, Somalia was kept solvent only through gifts, loans, and international handouts.¹⁷¹

One of the major questions in the current crisis is this: in a country devoid of a formal economy and with no natural resources, how is the continuing fighting being funded? Outside of external donors (which will be covered later), there are seven possibilities: illegal animal products, organized looting, trade in the narcotic plant *qat*, expatriates, extortion from the foreign relief agencies, monetization of relief supplies, and just plain printing more money. It is known that one of the illegal activities that occurred towards the end of Siad Barre's regime was illicit trade in elephant ivory and leopard skins. In 1988, for example, Somalia reported that it exported 8,000 elephant tusks - an number equal to 4,000 elephants which was greater than the

entire Somali elephant herd at the time.¹⁷² As a result of what can only be called state-sponsored poaching, the elephant population in Somalia was decimated and the leopard, once the national symbol of a proud nation, was virtually extinct by the time Siad Barre was removed from power. However, persistent rumors exist about vast hoards of elephant ivory still being traded in Somalia and that could be one source of funding for the clan-based factions.¹⁷³

The second possibility for financing the continuing fighting is organized looting, taking on the form of systematic acquisition of goods with resale value. Much of what has been looted has reportedly been exported to Kenya, Sudan, and the countries of the Arabian peninsula. The option of small-scale free-lance banditry means that militia commanders and financiers do not need to pay their gunmen when they do not need them for military action or commercial looting. This has been one of the ironies of the Somali crisis: banditry often decreases when organized fighting takes place.¹⁷⁴ As mentioned above, this degeneration of the Somali economy into commercial predation has profound implications for the future rehabilitation of the country. Most anything of value, especially in the central and southern parts of the country, has been looted and shipped out of the country. As a result, the rebuilding of Somalia's infrastructure will be much more complicated than it would otherwise have had to be.¹⁷⁵

It is also believed that the continuing civil war is being financed by a booming trade in the narcotic leaf, *quat*. *Quat* (*Catha edulis*), is an organic stimulant that is used throughout the Horn and consumed in large quantities by ethnic Somalis. *Quat* is reported to produce a dynamic high that suppresses the appetite and robs one of sleep. Additionally, it sharpens the aggression of the young Somali gunmen who chew it incessantly. *Quat* was banned and eradicated by Siad Barre in 1985, but the civil war in Somalia has caused a resurgence in use.¹⁷⁶ Besides inhibiting thirst, hunger and sleep, *quat* is believed to facilitate conversation. Because of this, in traditional Somali society where speech is regarded so highly, *quat* has been accepted as having a useful social purpose. However, it is believed that *quat* use among the young in Somalia today is excessive and has lost any useful social purpose.¹⁷⁷

Quat enters northern Somalia overland from northern Ethiopia and enters southern Somali by air from Kenya (from which it is of a higher quality and is called *miraa*).¹⁷⁸ In early 1992, an estimated 20 pick-up truck loads, estimated at 200 kilograms of quat each, were entering northern Somalia, while six to seven light planes a day were entering Somalia from Kenya by the airfield at Balidogli, which was controlled by the neutral Galge'el subclan. Additional aspects of the drug trade in Somalia include serving as a transit route for cocaine to Yemen from which the cocaine reportedly goes to Saudi Arabia.

Extortion of foreigners participating in the relief effort in Somalia has been another source of money for the clan-based factions. Prior to the U.S.-led intervention in December 1992, all visitors and relief agency staff were required to pay \$50 a day for a "technical" car with armed guards¹⁷⁹ and up to \$110 a day if it was mounted with a machinegun.¹⁸⁰ Additionally, prior to Operation "Restore Hope," the clan factions that controlled Mogadishu airport and Mogadishu port were extorting landing and docking fees. An example of how seriously the various Somali organizations took this source of revenue was demonstrated when U.N. Special Envoy Mohammed Sahnoun was forced to lie face down in his car at gunpoint by fighters in Mogadishu-North (controlled by Ali Mahdi's faction of the USC) who were unhappy over allegedly bigger sums of "protection money" that the U.N. had negotiated in Mogadishu-South (controlled by Aidid's USC faction).¹⁸¹

International relief supplies provided by relief agencies in Somalia were also a major source of income. Humanitarian supplies became the basis of an otherwise non-existent Somali economy as food was traded for other requirements.¹⁸²

The final method that for generating revenue is simply printing more money. In Somalia, government office became a license to print money and it is considered no accident that two of the main clashes between interim President Ali Mahdi Mohammed and Aidid were sparked by incidents in which Ali Mahdi tried to bring in plane loads of bank notes.¹⁸³

As for the future, Somali development has always depended on external financing for both domestic development and payment for imported materials and technical assistance. In 1990 for example, over 30% of the GNP was provided by foreign aid.¹⁸⁴ In the late 1970s and well into the 1980s, Somalia received more foreign aid per capita than any other country in Africa.¹⁸⁵ Without foreign assistance, Somalia has no chance of economic recovery.¹⁸⁶

All this is not to imply that Somalia is forever economically doomed. Somalia's best development prospects are in the agricultural sector which has been the country's past major economic activity. Although arable land is quite limited, it is believed that full utilization of the fertile region between the Juba and Shabeelle Rivers, if fully developed, can provide the needs of the domestic market as well as provide a small export crop (only 700,000 hectares out of a potential of 8,200,000 hectares has been cultivated). Additionally, as mentioned earlier, Somalia's Indian Ocean coast has excellent potential for a fisheries industry, with an estimated catch of 200,000 metric tons annually (in 1988 the estimated catch was only 18,200 metric tons).¹⁸⁷

A critical issue (perhaps the critical issue) in the future will be financing the state. Massive financial grants and loans will be required to allow the rebuilding of civil society, government and local administration, and economic structures. The U.N. must address this issue at the same time as a political solution. Whatever decisions the Security Council finally takes, they will need to be supported by a significant and continuing U.N. commitment.¹⁸⁸

As noted above, it is important to recognize that the majority of what limited industrial and agricultural infrastructure that did exist from the colonial era through the civil war has been destroyed or systematically looted during the civil war and the resulting anarchy. This includes the deliberate destruction of critical infrastructure in rebellious areas (irrigation systems, wells, killing of livestock) by Siad Barre's forces. Whatever successor state evolves from the Somali crisis, it will begin at a point even worse than the Somali state at independence.

Finally, one of the biggest challenges that will be faced in any reconstruction of the Somali economy is the impact of the loss of a very high proportion of its college-educated or

otherwise trained people. Since independence, Somali development has been retarded by the lack of trained and skilled professionals. Trained and capable people are a resource as much as an industrial or agricultural base. Siad S. Samatar, a Somali national who now teaches history at Rutgers University, has estimated that up to 90 percent of college-educated Somalis have fled the country, a situation which has left Somalia in the care of "illiterates and warlords." ¹⁸⁹

The issue of financing the continuing conflict is tied to who is providing the weapons and ammunition that is being expended in vast quantities. There can be no doubt that one of the sources is weapons left over from Somalia's Cold War supporters and other regional powers who sought to gain influence in the region by delivering arms to Somalia. ¹⁹⁰ These huge "stockpiles of weapons in the country render an arms embargo ineffective." ¹⁹¹

Several factions have reportedly been trying to buy arms on the international market, with Yemen, Egypt, Kenya, and South Africa accused of being the sources of recent ammunition supplies. ¹⁹² Additionally, it was reported that one of the reasons why the U.N. was so anxious to take control of the northeastern port of Bosasso was because of the suspicion that Bosasso was one port of entry for the continuing flow of arms. To support this claim, early in March 1993, the Greek registered ship *Maria* was intercepted carrying about 400 tons of Serbian arms to Somalia. The *Maria* was the fifth ship intercepted in a three month period and at least two others were believed to have gotten through the U.N. arms embargo. ¹⁹³

Other sources of arms have also been reported. For example, at least two plane loads of Libyan arms were delivered to Ali Mahdi's forces in 1991 and more Libyan arms were delivered to the Kisinayo area as well. Other reports suggest that a considerable quantity of arms crossed into Somalia from Ethiopia after the fall of President Mengistu. ¹⁹⁴ Thus, "despite measures to implement a general and complete embargo on weapons and equipment deliveries to Somalia, reports indicated that arms continued to flow into the country." ¹⁹⁵

Social and Cultural Aspects

The political dynamic of Somalia is largely determined by clan and lineage structure.¹⁹⁶

Somali clans are groups of kinsmen, linked through paternal descent. Within the Somali culture, all are descendents of two brothers, the sons of Hiil and ultimately descendants of noble Arab lineages and the family of the Prophet Mohammed. Clan families all claim a common ancestor.¹⁹⁷

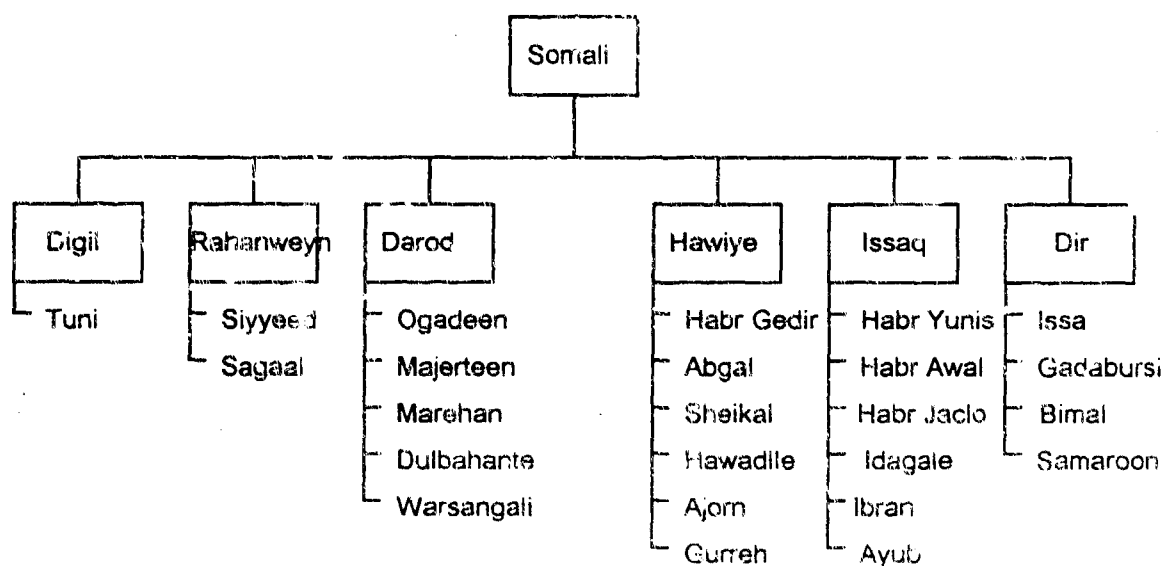


Figure 1. Major Somali Clans and Subclans

The Digil and Rahanweyn clans are primarily agricultural. These groups settled along the banks of the Juba and Shabeelle Rivers in the southern part of modern Somalia and they speak a different dialect of Somali than the other clan groups (the difference has been described as similar to that between Spanish and Portuguese).¹⁹⁸ The Darod, Hawiye, Issaq and Dir are the nomadic clan families. These groups believe they are the "true Somalis" and that they are therefore entitled to a higher status in Somali society.¹⁹⁹

Somali society is made all but ungovernable by what anthropologists call lineage segmentation. Stripped of scientific jargon, this segmentation can be illustrated through the following Arab Bedouin saying:

My brother and I against my half brother, my brother and I against my father, my father's household against my uncle's household, our two households (my uncle's and mine) against the rest of the immediate kin, the immediate kin against non-immediate members of the clan, my clan against other clans and finally, my nation and I against the world! ²⁰⁰

Lineage segmentation is a social system that results in and sanctions structural uncertainty as the norm. Social relations in the community are arranged so as to institutionalize instability. Within this system, one does not have a permanent enemy or a permanent friend. Depending on a given context, a man may be your friend or your foe. Everything is fluid and ever-changing. ²⁰¹

This lineage segmentation produces a society of extreme individualism, in which each man is his own king and no one is endowed, legally or morally, to exercise centralized national authority. Despite Siad Barre's oppressive and divisive rule, anarchic factionalism is in fact endemic in Somali society. Thus, the shifting and ephemeral clan alliances in the civil war are no more than the extreme manifestation of behavior inherent in Somali society. ²⁰²

Traditionally, Somali clans have played two apparently contradictory roles: presenting a united front against threats, yet reverting to mutual antagonism when the threat vanished. ²⁰³ The traditional methods of social control in the society was through three systems: the elders; the artistic force of poetry and music; and the social contract of *heer*. The institution of the elders gave the society a body of impartial arbitrators and conflict resolvers (the *heerbeegu*) who were able to mediate inter- and intra-clan disputes. The principle of *heer* has traditionally served as a constitution to assign, evaluate, and regulate punishments and rewards. *Heer* was the main instrument by which the elders governed the society. ²⁰⁴ Under the impact of colonialism and the subsequent rule of Siad Barre, all these institutions were marginalized and replaced by a bureaucratic, centralized state which the Somali people neither knew or cared how to operate.

A fundamental aspect of Somali culture that must be understood is the importance of the *diya*-paying group. I.M. Lewis, one of the most knowledgeable students of Somalis and their culture, has identified this group as the typical Somali's most binding and most frequently mobilized loyalty. This group, with a fighting strength of from a few hundred to a few thousand men, consists of close kinsmen who are united by a specific contractual alliance whose terms stipulate that they should pay and receive blood compensation (Arabic: *diya*) in concert. As I.M. Lewis defines this relationship:

An injury done by or to any member of this group implicates all those who are party to its treaty. Thus if a man of one group is killed by a man of another, the first group will collectively claim the damages due from the second. At the same time within any group a high degree of cooperation and mutual collaboration prevails.²⁰⁵

Traditional Somali social and political organization is typical of what has been called a "stateless society." These societies, most often pastoral and nomadic, are organized by lineage and kinship. The term "stateless" is used to refer to societies where no formal central political institutions existed. However, definite legal and social norms existed in traditional Somali society, and these were implemented by the elder councils. When disputes occurred between smaller sub-clan units, they were most often settled peacefully through arbitration or extended negotiations. Since these intra-clan conflicts involved adversaries from the same direct lineage, non-violent channels are pursued. Warfare, however, was not uncommon between larger clan units, where conflicts led to violent quests for retribution.²⁰⁶

Historically, Somalis have shown a fierce independence, an unwillingness to submit to authority, a strong class consciousness, and conflict among clans and subclans despite their sharing a common language, religion, and pastoral customs. For centuries, the nomadic Somali people have traversed the country, fighting each other for cattle, camels, and water holes. Narrow allegiances and, above all, the demands of survival in a harsh environment produced conflict among the Somalis themselves, generally organized around the *diya*-paying groups.²⁰⁷

Somalis also have a deep awareness of their history, culture and past achievements - conceivably more than most other African societies. Perhaps as a result of this identification, Somalis are quite capable of uniting in the face of danger with a resultant wave of nationalism.²⁰⁸ Walter S. Clarke, a Senior Foreign Service Officer in the U.S. State Department (with extensive experience in Africa to include serving as Charge d'Affairs in Djibouti) has identified two situations which traditionally unite the quarrelsome Somali clans: religious revivals, sometimes leading to a religious crusade (*jihad*) against less devout Somalis or non-Muslim peoples and resistance to foreign invasion of Somali ethnic territory and/or the reconquest of territories in which Somali culture predominates.²⁰⁹

Until the time of Siad Barre, the clan system was "the most enduring factor in the Somali social and political identity. Within this system, clan leaders played a key role in moderating disputes and keeping the peace."²¹⁰ In the words of Omar Arteh Ghalib, the interim Somali Prime Minister installed after Siad Barre was overthrown, "the tradition of the past has been tribal wars, but when they're over, the elders and the wise men meet under a tree and discuss their problems frankly and objectively."²¹¹ But this is the very mechanism that has been destroyed in Somali society. The deliberate manipulation and destruction of the Somali social structure by Siad Barre has left the Somalis with no institutions to resolve the conflict.

Religious Influences

An estimate 99 percent of Somalis are nominally Muslim, with the overwhelming majority of these belonging to the Sunni sect. It is believed that the Somalis adopted Islam as their religion as the result of their contact with traders along the Red Sea and Indian Ocean coasts (part of Somalia is believed to be the biblical "Land of Punt").²¹² Even though Siad Barre attempted to institute a secular society, most people retained the Muslim faith. There has been little evidence of large-scale Islamic fundamentalism within Somali society, but there are some indications of the beginning of fundamentalist penetration in Somalia as well as other areas in the region.

On 19 June 1992, for example, an Islamic uprising seized several towns in the northeast of Somali (including the town of Garowe and the port of Bosasso) which were under the control of the SSDF. Although the SSDF forces quickly regained all lost territory, this was the first time that Islamic fundamentalism played a major role in Somali politics. As a non-clan group, the Wadid (the name for this particular Islamic group) had been trusted and this area had been among the most peaceful areas of the country for the previous 18 months. Relations between the SSDF and the Wadid deteriorated when it became clear that the Wadid were using port profits to build up arms stocks.²¹³

The U.S.-led intervention played into the hands of the Islamic fundamentalists who were already enjoying some success with their anti-Western campaign. Traditionally strong in the Merca and Kismayo areas in southern Somalia, the fundamentalists spread rumors that aid-workers were kidnapping children in order to convert them to Christianity.²¹⁴ The Sudanese government, which supports the fundamentalists in the south, even held a solidarity meeting in Khartoum to denounce the alleged kidnappings. Some observers report that the intervention has done more to boost the Islamist cause in Somalia than years of support from Iran, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.²¹⁵

Some observers have also noted that the technique of starting at the bottom with aid and other small scale work, then building up to wider, more political action, is exactly the method employed by the National Islamic Front, which eventually seized power in Sudan. Sudan has itself shown great interest in Somalia, providing aid through a Committee for the Salvation of the Somali People (note: this is despite an estimated 11 million people at risk of starvation in the Sudan itself). Sudanese, Iranian, and Afghan military trainers have also been reported operating with several political organizations in Somalia. The U.S. has taken the potential of a fundamentalist threat to Somalia seriously. Herman J. Cohen, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, visited Khartoum on 9 December 1992 to warn against Sudanese interference in Somalia as Operation "Restore Hope" was launched.²¹⁶

Certainly, Somalia's chaos could allow Islamist groups to flourish. One group, *Al Itihad*, has established training areas in Somaliland and other Islamic groups carry out relief work - for example, Saudi Arabia's Islamic Relief Organization and Muslim World League operate extensively in Somalia, Somaliland, and some Muslim areas of Ethiopia. Allegations of Sudanese activity in Somalia are widespread, fueled by the Sudan's relationship with Iraq and Iran. Sudan was also among the few countries in the Arab world to criticize the U.S. intervention in Somalia.²¹⁷

One of the impacts of the intervention has been the rise in xenophobia which has provided an issue that can be exploited by the fundamentalists. Foreigners are widely blamed for drug trafficking, pornographic films, the prostitution of young girls, selling relief food and exporting the computers and jewelry pillaged during the battle of Mogadishu. Two different trends articulate this hostility. One is the Islamic fundamentalists, whose influence is growing both within and without the various political factions. The other is nationalist, which considers that aid workers behave like colonialists.²¹⁸

Hussein Adam, a Professor of Political Science at Holy Cross College and an ethnic Somali himself, has stated that there is a conspicuous Islamic revivalism occurring in Somalia that involves traditional Somali Sunni Islam. The chaos in Somalia has created pockets of youthful Islamic fundamentalists who are struggling to offer politicized and distorted Islam as a solution to Somalia's problems.²¹⁹ As a result, it has been reported that all the major political movements in Somalia have vocal Islamic blocks within them.²²⁰ Supporting the increasing role of political Islam, a religious reawakening has been reportedly occurring in Somalia, especially among the young. A central theme of this reawakening is the belief that the U.S. - U.N. relationship is used to suppress Muslims around the world with cases like Bosnia (where the U.N. allows Serbs to kill Muslims) and Iraq (where the U.S. bombed Muslims) used as examples.²²¹

Most Somali scholars in the west, however, downplay the influence of militant Islamic fundamentalism in Somalia. They see clan affiliation as a stronger force and regard militant Islam

in Somalia as a tool used by outsiders to disrupt Somalia. ²²² However, the potential impact of militant Islam in Somalia should not be entirely discounted. Although the various Islamic organizations in Somalia receive support from a diverse group of Muslim states and there is not yet a coherent mass Islamic movement across the country, it should be remembered that religious revivalism has historically thrived in conditions of political stress and social decay - the exact conditions that exist in Somalia today. ²²³

The Islamic fundamentalist threat aside, religion can serve as a stabilizing factor in Somalia. The religious leaders still retain respect of people and they have provided what little education many Somalis have received during the civil war. Additionally, religious groups play a supportive political role in Somalia. They provide the traditional elements which easily cross inter-clan barriers. ²²⁴

Islam has traditionally played a constructive role in Somali society promoting mediation, peace, learning and inter-clan cooperation. It will take many years to heal the physical and psychological consequences of the recent turmoil and the relatively moderate resurgence of Islam among the Somalis could serve a positive role in this regard. The Islamic message of self-esteem, dignity and personal rectitude can be an important component in the rehabilitation of Somali society. Additionally, Islamic agricultural cooperatives have played a leading role as models of rural production units since the 1950s. These Islamic communities could prove critical to the revival of Somalia's agricultural base. ²²⁵

ENDNOTES

¹Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, an Africa Watch Report (New York: Africa Watch, January 1990), overleaf.

²Keith Somerville, Foreign Military Intervention in Africa (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1990), 45.

³*Ibid.*, 42.

⁴Tom J. Farer, War Clouds on the Horn of Africa: The Widening Storm, 2d ed., (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1979), 74.

⁵Somalia: A Country Study, ed. Helen Chapin Metz (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), 10.

⁶Denis Herbstein, "The Alphabet War," Africa Report 36, no. 3 (May-June 1991): 68.

⁷Somalia: A Country Study, 10 - 11.

⁸*Ibid.*, 11.

⁹Farer, 74.

¹⁰Somalia: A Country Study, 12 - 13.

¹¹Farer, 70.

¹²Jeffrey A. Lefebvre, "The Geopolitics of the Horn of Africa," Middle East Policy 1, no. 3 (1992): 19.

¹³Somalia: A Country Study, 13.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁵John G. Drysdale, The Somali Dispute, (New York: Praeger, 1964).

¹⁶Farer, 80.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁸Somalia: A Country Study, 18 - 19. During the 1945 Potsdam Conference, the Allied Powers decided not to return seized Italian colonies to Italy at the end of the war.

¹⁹Selassie had met with Franklin D. Roosevelt in February 1945 and addressed the idea that Ethiopia should acquire Italy's former colony of Eritrea. Although initially joined in a federation, Ethiopia formally annexed Eritrea in 1962 and began the 30 years war over the region - see Lefebvre, "The Geopolitics of the Horn of Africa," 12 - 14. Sellassie also had a major impact in Article III of the OAU Charter which stipulated that all African boundaries should remain as they were after colonial rule - Samuel M. Makinda, Security in the Horn of Africa. (London, England: Brassey's, 1992), 70.

²⁰Kagnew served as a vital link in the U.S. defense communications system. From this base, the U.S. was able to electronically monitor and gather intelligence in Africa and the Middle East. Kagnew's significance as a communications base was amplified with the deployment of U.S. Polaris nuclear submarines in the early 1960's. By 1973, however, U.S. operations at Kagnew were being phased out due to the use of satellite communications - See Lefebvre, "The Geopolitics of the Horn of Africa," 12.

²¹Somalia: A Country Study, 21.

²²Somalia: A Country Study, 23. Haile Sellassie presented a note to the U.N. upon his return from exile that reads in part: "prior to the race of European powers to divide up the coast of Africa, Ethiopia included an exterior coastline along the Red Sea and Indian Ocean." See Farer, 83.

²³Farer, 76.

²⁴Somalia: A Country Study, 22.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 14.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 26.

²⁷Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 13.

²⁸Samuel M. Makinda, Security in the Horn of Africa. (London, England: Brassey's, 1992), 5.

²⁹Somerville, 185.

³⁰John W. Harbeson, "The Horn of Africa: From Chaos, Political Renewal?" Current History 90, no. 556 (May 1991): 222.

³¹Somerville, 187.

³²Somerville, 3.

³³Ibid., 9.

³⁴Ibid., 46.

³⁵Farer, 72.

³⁶Ibid., 70.

³⁷Somalia: A Country Study, 26.

³⁸Farer, 92.

³⁹Some sources put the number of political parties at 64 or even 69; see Raymond Thurston, "Detente in the Horn" Africa Report 14, no. 2 (February 1969): 6.

⁴⁰Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 14.

⁴¹Samuel M. Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos: Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1993), 19.

⁴²Farer, 93.

⁴³Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 20.

⁴⁴Farer, 96 - 97. Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Haile Sellassie of Ethiopia, both targets of Somali irredentism, signed a mutual defense agreement in 1964.

⁴⁵Ibid., 98 - 100.

⁴⁶Ibid., 100.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Raymond Thurston, "Detente in the Horn," Africa Report 14, no. 2 (February 1969): 6 - 13.

⁴⁹Farer, 109.

⁵⁰Ibid., 110.

⁵¹I.M. Lewis, "The Politics of the 1969 Somali Coup," Journal of Modern African Studies 10, no. 3 (1972): 397.

⁵²Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 15.

⁵³Alphonso A. Castagno, Jr. "An Interview with Mohammed Siad Barre" Africa Report 16, no. 9 (December 1971): 23.

⁵⁴Siad Barre on the concept of scientific socialism: "For us, socialism is simply defined: it is a system in which the state takes primary responsibility for the political, social, and economic development of the nation." See Castagno, "An Interview with Mohammed Siad Barre," 24.

⁵⁵Farer, 111.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Theodros Dagne, Somalia: A Country at War - Prospects for Peace and Reconciliation (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 92-522F, 15 June 1992), 9.

⁵⁸Ibid., 9 - 10.

⁵⁹I.M. Lewis, "The Ogaden and the Fragility of Somali Segmentary Nationalism," African Affairs 88, no. 353 (October 1989): 573.

⁶⁰Castagno, 23.

⁶¹Farer, 112. In 1967, there were only 800 students attending high school. By the 1980s, the high school population reached 100,000. See Copson and Dagne, Crisis and Chaos in Somalia, 16 September 1992, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 16 September 1992), 114.

⁶²Ibid., 111.

⁶³Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 24 - 25.

⁶⁴Farer, 112.

⁶⁵Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 17.

⁶⁶Ibid., 18 - 19.

⁶⁷Ibid., 22.

⁶⁸Ibid., 26.

⁶⁹Farer, 114.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, Personal Rule in Black Africa (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1982), 18.

⁷³I.M. Lewis, "Somalia - Recent History" in Africa South of the Sahara 1992 21st ed., (London, England: Europa Publications, Ltd, 1991), 891.

⁷⁴Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 22.

⁷⁵Ibid., 23.

⁷⁶Farer, 112.

⁷⁷Lewis, "The Ogaden and the Fragility of Somali Segmentary Nationalism," 574.

⁷⁸Farer, 120.

⁷⁹Ibid., 118.

⁸⁰Ibid., 122.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid., 120.

⁸³Ibid., 122 - 123.

⁸⁴Ibid., 126.

⁸⁵Lewis, "Somalia - Recent History," 890. In October 1986, Siad Barre announced restoration of full diplomatic relations between Somalia and the USSR due to dissatisfaction with amounts of military assistance from the U.S.

⁸⁶It has been proposed that the Soviets sought a "pax-USSR" in the region through ties to Ethiopia and Somalia as well as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. see Woodward, War or Peace, p. 17

⁸⁷Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, overleaf.

⁸⁸Ibid., 28 - 29.

⁸⁹Robert F. Gorman, Coping with Africa's Refugee Burden: A Time for Solutions (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987), 29, Table 2.1.

⁹⁰"Refugees: Somalia - Profit in Poverty," The Economist, 9 January 1988, 38.

⁹¹Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 31.

⁹²Walter S. Clarke, "Somalia - Background Information for Operations Restore Hope, 1992 - 1993 (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute, February 1993), 22.

⁹³Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 34. The refugees themselves were virtually a natural resource - the Somali government received food and money from the international community to support them.

⁹⁴Ibid., 37 - 38.

⁹⁵Ibid., 42.

⁹⁶Ibid., 43 - 44.

⁹⁷Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 87 - 88, 94 - 95.

⁹⁸Richard Greenfield, "Siad's Sad Legacy," Africa Report 36, no. 2 (March-April 1991): 18.

⁹⁹Hussein B. Adam, "Somalia: Rural Production Organizations and Prospects for Reconstruction" in Beyond Conflict in the Horn, ed. Martin Doornbos, Lionel Cliffe, Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed and John Markakis (Trenton, New Jersey: Red Sea Press, 1993), 214.

¹⁰⁰Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 63.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 124 - 125.

¹⁰²Ibid., 69.

¹⁰³Ibid., 115.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 228.

¹⁰⁵See Daniel Compagnon, "The Somali Opposition Fronts," Horn of Africa 13, nos. 1-2 (January - June 1990): 34. This agreement followed a similar arrangement with President Moi of Kenya in July 1984 where Siad Barre stated that Somalia "no longer has any claim to Kenyan territory (Banks, 603).

¹⁰⁶Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 3.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 196.

¹⁰⁸Greenfield, "Siad's Sad Legacy," 18.

¹⁰⁹Somalia - A Government at War with its Own People, 4.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 4.

¹¹¹Compagnon, 35.

¹¹²See Richard Greenfield, "Somalia Slides into Chaos," New African no. 266 (November 1989): 11. It is widely believed that the assassination was in fact carried out under Siad Barre's order (I.M. Lewis, "Somalia - Recent History," 893).

¹¹³Clarke, 30.

¹¹⁴Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 18.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 21.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 25.

¹¹⁷Lewis, "The Ogaden and the Fragility of Somali Segmentary Nationalism," 577 - 578.

¹¹⁸Lewis, "Somalia - Recent History," 891.

¹¹⁹Greenfield, "Siad's Sad Legacy," 16.

¹²⁰Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 17.

¹²¹Ibid., 25.

¹²²"Somalia - The Mayor of Mogadishu," The Economist, 25 September 1990, 47.

¹²³Lewis, "Somalia - Recent History," 893.

- ¹²⁴Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 26.
- ¹²⁵Ibid., 26.
- ¹²⁶Ibid., 27.
- ¹²⁷Ibid.
- ¹²⁸Peter Biles, "Filling the Vacuum," Africa Report 36, no. 6 (November-December 1991): 36.
- ¹²⁹Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 27, 29.
- ¹³⁰Marc Michaelson, "Somalia: The Painful Road to Reconciliation," Africa Today 40, no. 2 (2d Quarter 1993): 57.
- ¹³¹Rakiya Omaar, "Somalia: At War with Itself," Current History 91, no. 565 (May 1992): 233.
- ¹³²Biles, "Filling the Vacuum," 36.
- ¹³³"Nasty, Brutish, Split," The Economist, 7 September 1991, 42.
- ¹³⁴Hussein Ali Dualeh, "From Siad Barre to Farah Aideed," The Weekly Review (Kenya), 3 September 1993, 33.
- ¹³⁵"Somalia: Enemy's Enemy," Africa Confidential 33, no. 9 (8 May 1992): 8.
- ¹³⁶Peter Biles, "Anarchy Rules," Africa Report 37, no. 4 (July-August 1992): 33.
- ¹³⁷Dualeh, 34.
- ¹³⁸Ibid.
- ¹³⁹George H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory (London, England: Harrap and Company, 1960), 387-404.
- ¹⁴⁰Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 31.
- ¹⁴¹Lewis, "The Ogaden and the Fragility of Somali Segmentary Nationalism," 578.
- ¹⁴²Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 41.

¹⁴³The Stateman's Yearbook 1992- 1993, ed. Brian Hunter (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1992), 1178.

¹⁴⁴Political Handbook of the World - 1991, ed. Arthur S. Banks (Birmingham, NY: CSA Publications, State University of New York, 1991), 602.

¹⁴⁵Farer, 90.

¹⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁴⁷Margaret Dolley, "Somalia: Economy," in Africa South of the Sahara 1992 21st ed., (London, England: Europa Publications, Ltd, 1991), 895.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹Stateman's Yearbook 1992- 1993, 1179.

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁵¹Adam, 154 - 155.

¹⁵²William B. Wood, "Somalia: Poor Agricultural Prospects," U.S. Department of State Geographic Notes 2, no. 4 (Winter 1992/1993): 22; and "Country Profile: Somalia," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 3, no. 51 (21 December 1992): 902.

¹⁵³Wood, 22.

¹⁵⁴"Country Profile: Somalia," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 3, no. 51 (21 December 1992): 902.

¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶Lefebvre, "The Geopolitics of the Horn of Africa," 15.

¹⁵⁷Dolley, "Somalia: Economy," 896. Duaieh has identified these companies as Chevron Oil, Conoco Oil, Phillips Petroleum, and Amoco Oil. See Duaieh, 36.

¹⁵⁸Dolley, "Somalia: Economy," 896.

¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰Makinda Seeking Peace from Chaos, 46.

¹⁶¹Peter Woodward, War - or Peace - in North-East Africa (London, England: Centre for Security and Conflict Studies, 1992), 7.

¹⁶²Dolley, "Somalia: Economy," 895-896.

¹⁶³Adam, 158.

¹⁶⁴Stephen P. Riley, War and Famine in Africa (London, England: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, February 1994), 19.

¹⁶⁵Alex de Waal, "The Shadow Economy," Africa Report, March/April 1993, 25 - 26.

¹⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁶⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸Makinda, Security in the Horn of Africa, 35.

¹⁶⁹See Richard Greenfield, "What Price Political Prisoners?" Africa Report 33, no. 1 (January-February 1988): 51. Greenfield, a former political advisor to the Somali government, reported that official Somali documents placed annual debt service payments at 167 percent of export earnings in 1987.

¹⁷⁰"The Mayor of Mogadishu, The Economist, 29 September 1990, 47.

¹⁷¹Greenfield, "Somalia Slides into Chaos," 10. Italy especially has had more financial and economic commitments in Somalia than any other western country in the recent past. Also see Makinda, Security in the Horn of Africa, 67.

¹⁷²*Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁷³Greenfield, "Siad's Sad Legacy," 18. There is little doubt that Somalis have conducted large-scale elephant poaching in Kenya and Ethiopia.

¹⁷⁴de Waal, "The Shadow Economy," 28.

¹⁷⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶Quat is not yet again grown in Somalia. It is a difficult crop to grow, requiring four years to mature as well as consistent rainfall.

¹⁷⁷Clarke, 3.

¹⁷⁸"Somalia: Chaos Spreads to the North," Africa Confidential 33, no. 7 (3 April 1992): 2.

¹⁷⁹"Somalia: Protection Racket," Africa Confidential 33, no. 18 (11 September 1992): 8.

¹⁸⁰"Somalia: The Politics of Hunger," Africa Confidential 33, no. 19 (25 September 1992): 3.

¹⁸¹"Somalia: Protection Racket," Africa Confidential, 8.

¹⁸²"30,000-Strong UN Force Steps in to 'Restore Hope'," UN Chronicle 30, no. 2 (March 1993): 15.

¹⁸³de Waal, "The Shadow Economy," 28.

¹⁸⁴"White Man's Burden," The Economist, 25 September 1993, 49.

¹⁸⁵Alex de Waal and Rakiya Omaar, "Doing Harm by Doing Good? The International Relief Effort in Somalia," Current History 92, no. 574 (May 1993): 202.

¹⁸⁶Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 47.

¹⁸⁷Dolley, "Somalia: Economy," 895-896.

¹⁸⁸"Somalia: At Last Someone Listens," Africa Confidential 33, no. 17 (28 August 1992): 2.

¹⁸⁹Said S. Samatar, "The Politics of Poetry," Africa Report 38, no. 5 (September-October 1993): 17.

¹⁹⁰"UN Truce in Somalia, But When Will Fighting End," Africa Report 37, no. 2, (March-April 1992): 8.

¹⁹¹*Ibid.*

¹⁹²"Somalia: At Last Someone Listens," Africa Confidential 33, no. 17 (28 August 1992): 2.

¹⁹³"Somalia: The UN Trundles Into Action," Africa Confidential 34, no. 6 (19 March 1993): 3.

¹⁹⁴"Somalia: Ways to End the Slaughter," Africa Confidential 33, no. 3 (7 February 1992): 6.

¹⁹⁵"Security Council Establishes New UN Operation in Somalia," UN Chronicle 29, no. 3 (September 1992): 15.

¹⁹⁶Clarke, 6.

¹⁹⁷Colin Legum, The Horn of Africa: Prospects for Political Transformation (London, England: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, September 1992), 13.

¹⁹⁸Clarke, 6.

¹⁹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰⁰Samatar, 16.

²⁰¹*Ibid.*

²⁰²*Ibid.*

²⁰³Makinda, Security in the Horn of Africa, 26.

²⁰⁴Samatar, 16 - 17.

²⁰⁵J.M. Lewis, The Modern History of Somaliland (New York: Praeger, 1965).

²⁰⁶Michaelson, 53.

²⁰⁷Farer, 71.

²⁰⁸Clarke, 13.

²⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 16.

²¹⁰Rakiya Omar and Alex de Waal, "The Lessons of Famine," Africa Report 37, no. 6 (November-December 1992): 63.

²¹¹Peter Biles, "Starting From Scratch," Africa Report 36, no. 3 (May-June 1991): 59.

²¹²Clarke, 5.

213 Wadis translates to "Mullahs" and is the term Somalis usually use when referring to the Muslim fundamentalists (who dislike calling themselves Muslim Brotherhood). The political organization of this group is known as *Al Itihad al Islami*, which translates to Islamic Unity. See Legum, The Horn of Africa: Prospects for Political Transformation, 15 and "Somalia: Islamic Uprising," Africa Confidential 33, no. 13 (3 July 1992): 8.

214 Reports indicate that fundamentalists around Merca were receiving support from Sudan and Iran. See Keith B. Richburg, "Diseases Sweep Somalis, Kill More Than Famine," Washington Post, 2 October 1992, sec A, p.46.

215 "Somalia: Warlords Meet the New World Order," Africa Confidential 33, no. 24 (4 December 1992): 3.

216 "Somalia: Beyond the Pax Americana," Africa Confidential 33, no. 25 (18 December 1992): 3.

217 "The Horn of Africa: Recasting the Nation State," Africa Confidential 34, no. 1 (8 January 1993): 5.

218 "Somalia: The Politics of Hunger," Africa Confidential 33, no. 19 (25 September 1992): 4.

219 U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Recent Developments in Somalia: Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, 103d Cong., 1st sess., 17 February 1993, 23.

220 Adam, 162.

221 Dualeh, 37.

222 Jeffrey A. Lefebvre, "US Military in Somalia - A Hidden Agenda?" Middle East Policy 2, no. 1 (1993): 60.

223 Clarke, 17.

224 Ibid., 13.

225 Adam, 159.

CHAPTER 6

NATURE OF THE "INSURGENCY"

Clan Organizations

Due to the number and ever-changing alignment of clan-based political groups in Somalia, this section will present only key aspects of the political groups in Somalia as they existed in late 1992. Basically, all political movements in modern Somalia have a clan basis.¹ Although interclan violence has been a factor in Somali society for centuries (especially due to traditional enmities such as between the Darod and the Isaaq or between the Darod and the Hawiye),² the level of violence experienced during the Somali civil war, as well as the impact of modern weapons, may have changed the fundamental nature of interclan fighting. Due to Siad Barre's policy of playing one clan (or subelement thereof) against another in order to keep himself in power, the relationship among the various clans and subclans has been severely stressed. As a result, traditional clan relationships may be unalterable affected, at least for the near term.

Hussein Ali Dualeh, one of Somalia's former diplomats, has stated: "in a nomadic society like the Somalis, clan animosities run very deep. Naturally, it has been exacerbated or aggravated by the Barre regime that used the Somali clan system to divide and rule for over 20 years."³ These divisions remain deep and they have been reinforced by feelings of needing to avenge the casualties of recent fighting. Without tangible political and economic rewards to show for years of fighting, the "warlords" have been reluctant to ask their supporters to lay down their arms.⁴

An anthropology text could be written on the various clan and subclan animosities that exist in modern Somalia. The following examples illustrate the type of scores that remain to be

settled due to the civil war and subsequent fighting. One example of remaining animosities include the inter-clan strife that exists between the Rahanweyn clan-family in the farmlands of the south and the Marehan (Siad Barre's subclan). During the Siad Barre era, the Rahanweyn (especially members of the Gabaweyn subclan), were systematically dispossessed of their land by the Marehan. The Marehan controlled most of the key government positions in Siad Barre's regime (recall the acronym "MOD" - Marehan, Ogadeni, and Dulbahante - the favored clan elements in Siad Barre's regime) and were able to buy the titles to land that had traditionally been within Rahanweyn territory by manipulating the purchasing of land titles without the Rahanweyn's knowledge.⁵

Other examples of remaining inter-clan animosities include the intensification of clan conflict in the southern part of the country between the Hawiye-based United Somali Congress (USC) and the Ogadeni-based Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), which was in turn exacerbated by a regrouping of Siad Barre's Darod clan groupings under the military banner of the Somali National Front (SNF).⁶ The Habr Gedir (Hawiye clan) especially have lost much of their grazing land to their traditional rivals the Majerteen while they have been fighting in Mogadishu.⁷

Another type of conflict is intra-clan. An example of this type has occurred in the Kismayu area, where the Ogadeni clans were in conflict among themselves, especially the Awliyahan and Rer Abdille groups (with which Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess is aligned), as well as still combining when necessary to fight against General Hersi Morgan's Harti Majerteen when threatened.⁸

Another type of instability is caused by infighting within the political groups which are themselves fragmented. The Somali National Movement (SNM), for example, has divided along ideological lines into "liberals," Islamic fundamentalists and traditionalists.⁹ By the time of Operation "Restore Hope," the Abgal subclan (Ali Mahdi's base of support) itself had split into three complicated factions: the Harti Abgal and the Murosade; the Waisle and elements of the Harti Abgal; and the Wabudan and several smaller clans.¹⁰

Fundamentally, deep animosities remain between and even within the various clans, subclans and their associated political organizations in post-Siad Barre Somalia. While much of this enmity is historical and based on centuries-old malice, many of these hatreds are relatively recent and directly caused by Siad Barre's manipulation of traditional Somali culture to serve his own needs. This confused situation has been complicated by the nature of traditional Somali culture itself and its tendency to form, break, and reform alliances in no consistent pattern. An additional complication is the ever growing number of clan-based groups. Fawzi Gulied, a representative of the Somali Community Service, has testified before Congress that "every Somali who has a gun creates his own faction." Although there are 15 major factions identified, there are also many smaller groups.¹¹

Contrary to many reports, actual clan fighting forces are small, with usually 2 - 3,000 men involved on either side in a pitched battle. The "regular" forces of the SNM, the SSDF, and the two USC factions in Mogadishu number no more than 5 - 6,000 men each. However, there are certainly large numbers of irregulars used by all factions. The Hawiye-based USC, for example, reportedly employed 25 - 30,000 fighters at the time of Siad Barre's flight in January 1991. These irregulars belong to different subclans and generally owe little allegiance to anyone, although they often align themselves with Aidid or Ali Mahdi (note: it is these irregular fighters that have reportedly been responsible for most of the looting that has taken place in Mogadishu).¹²

One of the most difficult tasks involved in any attempt to resolve Somalia's difficulties will be to try to control the clan based militia groups. Mediation efforts attempted by Djibouti, Egypt, and Italy have failed for a variety of reasons. These include the fact that the various clans and subclans still hate each other vehemently, the faction leaders derive their legitimacy from their ability to effectively provide for their fighters (who can abandon them at any time), as well as the fact that the number of clan militias and other political groups keeps on rising.¹³

Organization and Leadership

At the time of Operation "Restore Hope" there were 15 major clan-based organizations. Each had its own leadership structure and base of support. The leaders and principal lieutenants of each of the organizations have received a variety of training in military establishments in Italy, the Soviet Union, the U.S. and other countries. Although the leaders of many of these factions are referred to in the media as "warlords," this term creates a false impression. These men are in every sense leaders of political groups that have taken up arms and are probably seen as the legitimate leadership within their organizations.¹⁴ Many are in fact elected by their supporters. However, it is true that they are exceptionally responsive to their supporters. This is made necessary by the nature of Somali society where alliances can be rapidly broken and realigned.¹⁵ The following are the major political organizations in Somalia as they existed at the time of the UNITAF operation.

Somali National Front (SNF). The SNF is composed of members of Siad Barre's Marehan sub-clan (Darod clan). This group was formed in early 1992 to protect clan interests after Barre's ouster. The SNF Chairman is General Omer Haji Mohammed, a former minister of defense and commander of the Somali national army (who was incidentally imprisoned by Barre from 1982 to 1988 due to disagreements with Barre over the management of the armed forces). As a Marehan movement, the SNF is distrusted by most Somalis who believe it is only a front for Barre's return to power.¹⁶

Somali National Movement (SNM). Composed primarily of members of the Isaaq clan of northern Somalia, the SNM was organized at London, England in April 1981. The SNM was formed in order to protect the Isaaqs from members of the Darod clan-family (principally from the Ogadeni subclan) who were moved into traditional Isaaq territory after the Ogaden War.¹⁷ The SNM reportedly receives substantial support from Saudi Arabia and other conservative Arab states, but it is believed to suffer from a lack of cohesion due to the wide variety of ideologies incorporated (it includes Marxist, Islamist, and pro-Western factions). The SNM has consistently

supported greater autonomy for the area, a more equitable distribution of resources, and political democratization. The SNM refused to participate in a National Salvation Committee in early 1991 after Siad Barre was forced out of Mogadishu and announced the succession of the north in May 1991 to form the Republic of Somaliland. The SNM is led by Abdirahman Ahmed Ali "Tur".

Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). The SPM was organized in 1989 by members of the Ogadeni sub-clan that live in and around Kismayu. Although the SPM formerly supported Siad Barre's government (the Ogadeni were part of Siad Barre's "MOD" power base), it has recently operated between the Juba River and the Kenyan border in an effort to gain autonomy for that region.¹⁸ The SPM is led by Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess, but a power struggle has been reported between Jess and Adn Nur "Gabiyu".

Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). The SSDF was formed in 1979 by members of the Majerteen sub-clan (of the Darod clan) after the Majerteen coup against Siad Barre that followed the Ogaden War. The SSDF fought against the Siad Barre regime from bases in Ethiopia (and was supported by both Libya and Ethiopia) until the SSDF reached a political settlement with Barre in 1982. The SSDF was resurrected during the Somali civil war under the leadership of Abdullahi Yusef Ahmed, who had participated in the 1979 coup attempt himself. The SSDF operates from Bossaso, the main port in northeastern Somalia, and controls the northeast portion of the country. As a sidenote, the post-1991 crisis in Somalia has seen peace between the Majerteen and the Habr Gedir for the first time in many years.¹⁹

A small wing of the SSDF is led by General Mohammed Saeed Hersi "Morgan" and fights for Majerteen subclan members in Kismayu. He is supported by Marehan clansmen who believe that since Morgan is also Siad Barre's son-in-law that he will help bring Siad Barre back to power (note: Morgan also led the Somali national army elements in the fight against the Isaaq in the north in 1988).²⁰

United Somali Congress (USC). The USC was organized in January 1989 by members of the Hawiye clan of central Somalia. ²¹ The USC is divided along sub-clan lines, with both main factions operating in and around the Mogadishu area. One faction consists primarily of the Abgal subclan and is led by Ali Mahdi. One of the original founders (and funders) of the USC, Ali Mahdi is no stranger to politics and served in the Somali parliament that was dissolved by Siad Barre after to 1969 coup. Ali Mahdi is ostensibly the President of Somalia, but he has no authority outside of south Mogadishu. ²²

The second major USC faction is principally composed of the Habr Gedir subclan and is led by Mohammed Farah Aidid. Aidid was elected USC chairman on 4 July 1991 with 70 percent of the vote. Later in that month, at a national reconciliation conference held in Djibouti (15 - 21 July 1991), Ali Mahdi was confirmed as interim president for a period of two years. Aidid had apparently wanted both jobs and the USC was split into at least two factions. A former commander of the now defunct Somali National Army, Barre always considered Aidid his rival and put him in solitary confinement from 1970 - 1976. After his release, Barre gave Aidid a series of high-level government jobs and ultimately the Somali Ambassadorship to India. Aidid defected in 1989 to form the USC and begin the USC's armed struggle against Siad Barre. ²³

Somali National Alliance (SNA). The SNA is an umbrella organization composed of the SPM, the SDM, the USC's Habr Gedir faction, and the Southern Somali National Movement (SSNM). The SSNM is one of the lesser political organizations and is led by Colonel Abdi Warsame Isaq. This movement is supported by the Dir clan which inhabits the most fertile areas from Kismayu to Merca in southern Somalia. Additionally, there were SPM and SDM organizations that did not belong to the SNA.

Rounding out the 15 major organizations were the Somali Africans Muki Organization (SAMO - this organization was unique in the sense that it was made up of non-Somali Bantus that live in the Juba and Shabeelle River area), the Somali Democratic Alliance (SDA), the Somali

National Democratic Union (SNDU), the United Somali Front (USF), and the United Somali Party (USP).²⁴

The Somali clan-based political organizations identified above have a patchwork of objectives ranging from a local consolidation of power and authority (e.g., Isaaq-based SNM) to hegemony over the remnants of the country (e.g., both sides of the USC). Most groups, however, are believed to have an objective in between - basic survival of their lineage and the protection of their traditional territory. The general consensus among international observers is that no group has the power to achieve anything beyond very limited gains in their local area.

ENDNOTES

¹Colin Legum, The Horn of Africa: Prospects for Political Transformation (London, England: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, September 1992), 13.

²Daniel Compagnon, "The Somali Opposition Fronts," Horn of Africa 13, nos. 1-2 (January - June 1990): 38.

³Hussein Ali Dualeh, "From Siad Barre to Farah Aideed" The Weekly Review (Kenya), 3 September 1993, 32.

⁴Samuel M. Makinda, Security in the Horn of Africa, (London, England: Brassey's, 1992), 36.

⁵Rakiya Omaar and Alex de Waal, "The Lessons of Famine," Africa Report 37, no. 6 (November-December 1992): 62.

⁶Peter J. Schraeder, "U.S. Intervention in the Horn of Africa Amidst the End of the Cold War," Africa Today 40, no. 2 (2d Quarter 1993): 13.

⁷"Somalia: Ways to End the Slaughter," Africa Confidential 33, no. 3 (7 February 1992): 6.

⁸"Somalia: Crossing the Clans," Africa Confidential 34, no. 3 (5 March 1993): 8.

⁹Samuel M. Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos: Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1993), 25.

¹⁰"Somalia: Warlords Meet the New World Order," Africa Confidential 33, no. 4 (4 December 1992): 2.

¹¹U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, 102d Cong., 2d sess., 16 September 1992, 115.

¹²"Somalia: At Last Someone Listens," Africa Confidential 33, no. 17 (28 August 1992): 2.

¹³Makinda, Security in the Horn of Africa, 37.

¹⁴Legum, 14.

¹⁵Dualeh's article contains an excellent summary on pages 34 - 36 of the clan organization leadership as it existed in mid-1993.

¹⁶Dualeh, 35.

¹⁷Political Handbook of the World - 1991, ed. Arthur S. Banks (Birmingham, NY: CSA Publications, State University of New York, 1991), 604.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Dualeh, 35.

²⁰ibid., 35-36.

²¹Political Handbook of the World - 1991, 603.

²²Dualeh, 35.

²³Ibid.

²⁴U.N. Secretary General, The Situation in Somalia - Progress Report of the Secretary General, S/25168, (New York: The United Nations Security Council, 26 January 1993).

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter seeks to answer the thesis question: should the Somali clan factions have been disarmed as part of the UNITAF mission? The model for this chapter is the use of the feasibility, acceptability, suitability criteria. First proposed in the book Sound Military Decisions,¹ the analysis of each of these criteria provides a framework for evaluating policy decisions. These factors are not strictly quantifiable. Additionally, each of these factors are interdependent and their evaluation remains a test of professional judgment. Each proposed course of action should be examined for:

Suitability. Will the attainment of the proposed course of action achieve the desired effect? Under the suitability criteria, the military activity must achieve some political purpose. The military objective is suitable if, when it is achieved, it leads to the desired political or national security objective.

Feasibility. Can the proposed course of action be achieved with the means available? Under the feasibility criteria, the proposed course of action is examined to determine if it has a reasonable chance of success with the given means.

Acceptability. Are the consequences (the costs) of the proposed course of action justified by the importance of the desired effect? The military objective must be achieved at a reasonable cost. This criteria is used to evaluate the benefit (the end state) against the tangible and intangible costs involved in attaining the objective.

In the terms of this study, the feasibility, suitability, and acceptability criteria translate to these questions: was disarming the Somali clan factions feasible? (could the UNITAF forces have accomplished this task?); was disarming the Somali clan factions suitable? (would the disarming the Somali clan factions accomplish the political purpose of the operation (which was to move food to people threatened with starvation)?; and finally, was the disarming of the Somali clan factions acceptable? (could the Somali clans have been disarmed at an acceptable cost?).

Feasibility

Technically disarming the Somali clan factions was feasible -- in the same sense as counting the grains of sand on a beach is feasible. Because of the irregular nature of the Somali clan factions and the widespread availability of weapons in the country, the UNITAF forces would have had to disarm the entire Somali population. This would have been an exceptionally complex, time-consuming - and dangerous - task.

This task would have been made more complex by the fact that clan faction leadership had a very tenuous control over their forces (see Chapter 6). Any agreement by a clan faction to disarm could have been met with the fragmentation of elements of that group into two or more factions with different opinions on disarming. As early as the Addis Ababa conference in which 14 of the factions agreed to a cease-fire and subsequent disarmament on 15 January 1993, diplomats were questioning whether faction leaders would be able to carry out the disarmament agreement.²

The UNITAF forces did conduct selective disarmament of Somalis during Operation "Restore Hope" which was directly associated with mission requirements. This included putting the "technicals" and heavy weapons in the populations centers (especially Mogadishu, Kismayu, Bardera and Baidoa) in cantonment areas under UNITAF control.³ However, the arms caches seized early in the "Restore Hope" mission (such as the raid on the Bakara arms bazaar in Mogadishu on 11 January 1993) revealed large numbers of diverse types of weapons and

indicated that the country was still "awash with arms" as it was described before the arrival of the UNITAF force. ⁴

The first problem that would have confronted UNITAF would have been determining the number of weapons in Somalia. These weapons consisted of a "dizzying assortment of assault rifles and grenade launchers stockpiled during more than two decades of military assistance from East and West," ⁵ but there is no clear idea of exactly how many weapons were in the country and open source estimates of the number of weapons in Somalia range as high as two million of all types. ⁶ Although a somewhat educated guess could be made from the strength of the Somali military, paramilitary, and police as it existed prior the fall of Siad Barre, this technique would not be entirely accurate. The Somalis, especially the pastoral nomads, are a traditionally armed people. Additionally, in his attempt to hold on to power, Siad Barre armed various clans and subclans to fight against others in the belief he could simply outgun any opponents. As a result, weapons transfers were conducted extensively and there was very little accountability of these weapons.

Additionally, the overthrow of the Ethiopian Government of Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1991 unleashed a new supply of arms in the Horn of Africa. With poorly patrolled borders, the region had a thriving black market in weapons. ⁷ Herman J. Cohen testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee that "There were 200,000 troops in Ethiopia who were demobilized when they lost the war and all of them had arms - arms which I would say were probably sold to Somalis." ⁸

Somalia's international borders are vast and very porous. Somalia itself is slightly larger than the State of Texas and shares land borders with Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti over 2,600 kilometers long (Somalia also has an extensive coastline along the Red Sea and Indian Ocean of over 3,000 kilometers). In most places, Somalia's international borders are no more than a pole stuck in the ground every hundred meters or so. Additionally, a large number of Somalis are intimately familiar with the terrain of these border regions due to the nomadic nature of a large

proportion of the Somali population which has traditionally not respected international borders. As a result, blocking the flow of arms into the country to a significant degree would have required an enormous effort - probably far beyond what the U.S. and the rest of the international community would have been willing to undertake.

Throughout the UNITAF and UNOSOM II mission, weapons continued to move into Somalia, especially from Ethiopia.⁹ The French contingent in UNOSOM II, for example, reported that they could only police the main highways and were unable to control the camel trails. They were aware that fresh arms shipments were moving through French-controlled territory towards Mogadishu, but they were spread too thinly to have an impact on this flow.¹⁰

Additionally, the question of weapons caches on the Kenyan and Ethiopian side of the border would have needed to be addressed in any disarmament effort. How these weapons caches would be discovered and collected would present another enormous challenge. Finally, what could have been done about the self-declared Somali Land Republic? This area was not in the area of operations for the UNITAF mandate, but the other clan-based political movements could not have been expected to allow leaving the SNM fully armed, fully knowing there were many old scores to be settled.

The issue of disarming some groups while leaving others armed was addressed by Hussein Adam (a Professor of Political Science at Holy Cross College, a student of the Horn of Africa, and an ethnic Somali himself), in testimony before congress on 17 February 1993:

Somali disarmament policies must be functional and pragmatic as pursued so far [referring to the UNITAF operation]. One must distinguish, as far as possible, between proto-political groupings and outright bandits. To disarm the former requires some forms of cooperation and mutual undertakings. A careless disarming process could leave some groups vulnerable to across-the-border attacks by their actual or potential enemies.¹¹

Simultaneous disarmament of Somali clan-based factions would have been a logistic nightmare, requiring disarming over 15 separate factions over a large area and would have significantly complicated the mission: moving food to starving people. Additionally, any

agreement to disarm would have been likely to fall apart if even one of the groups refused to comply.¹² An example of what could happen when disarmament was not conducted simultaneously occurred in Kismayu in early 1993.

Forces under Omer Jess controlled Kismayo at the time of the intervention. This force was partially disarmed by elements of UNITAF early in the intervention. Shortly afterwards, Jess' faction was attacked by well-armed SNF forces under General Mohammed Hersi Morgan which had not been disarmed by UNITAF (and which had secure bases in Kenya where they operated from). After one attempt to take Kismayu was repulsed by UNITAF forces, the SNF infiltrated several hundred lightly armed men into Kismayu in March 1993 and quickly ejected Jess' forces from the city. Even African Rights believes that Morgan's task was made easier by the partial disarmament of the SNA in Kismayu.¹³ This perceived unfairness in disarmament resulted in hostility between the UNITAF forces and the SNA (Aidid and Jess) who accused the U.N. of conniving with Morgan to take over Kismayu.¹⁴

Another aspect of disarmament is this: the disarmament of shopkeepers and householders left them prey to robbers.¹⁵ Americans are no strangers to the discussion of gun control. In fact, the National Rifle Association could collect some excellent evidence of what happens when you disarm the law abiding citizens. I do not make the gun control analogy flippantly. Ambassador Oakley himself reportedly remarked that "Somalis feel they have the right to bear arms. It is not written into their constitution, but it is in their soul."¹⁶ African Rights has reported the example of Salada Nur, a Mogadishu shopkeeper, who had her AK-47 taken away by U.S. soldiers. Shortly thereafter she was robbed at gunpoint of 3 million Somali shillings. She had no problems with bandits during the entire time she had her gun.¹⁷

Another logistic challenge involved in disarming the Somali clan factions would have been that many weapons were hidden during the UNITAF mission. African Rights has reported that "thousands of guns were hidden" in the anticipation of forcible disarmament. Even before the intervention began, many Somalis said that they suspected the gunmen would put away their guns

or retreat into the bush until the Americans left.¹⁸ In fact, Osman Ato, an Aidid aid, told a Washington Post reporter that "There are more arms hidden than they [UNITAF] can imagine"¹⁹ There can be no doubt that many Somalis buried or otherwise hid a large number of weapons, stockpiling "their weapons in secret locations as insurance against the future."²⁰ Locating and collecting the weapons that are reportedly buried around a country the size of Somalia would have been a virtually impossible task.

In the final analysis, disarmament of the Somalis as part of the UNITAF mission was not feasible. In the words of one student of the area, "total pacification is probably impossible - it would mean confiscating the arms of all Somalis and remaining as a long-term occupying force."²¹ Such an effort was clearly beyond the capabilities of the UNITAF force, whose primary mission was to move food to starving Somalis.

Suitability

The total disarmament of Somalis, even if it was feasible, would not have solved the long-term political problems of the country. The facts remain that UNITAF's selective disarmament policy supported the delivery of food aid to starving Somalis. A complete disarmament of Somalis was not required for UNITAF's mission. The question that remains is this: would disarming the Somalis have significantly contributed to stability in Somalia? Herman J. Cohen, The Department of State's Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, succinctly summed up the problem during testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 17 December 1992:

I think the whole disarmament issue has to be put in the context of the political process. I think the argument we have been seeing lately of whether the coalition forces should disarm or should not disarm is a rather sterile argument.

Disarmament comes with political reconciliation among the armed groups. They will get together and decide on the encampment of armed forces, on the collection of arms, and then the storage of arms pending a final political settlement.

We feel it is a lot better to reduce arms through negotiations and reconciliation and have the Somalis themselves decide on how to control arms than to try to eliminate arms through a coercive method - a method for which we have no time in any event. ²²

As Kevin Henry, the Regional Manager for East Africa of CARE International, stated in testimony before Congress on 16 September 1992: "Somalia's problems today are essentially of a political nature, and they can only be resolved by all the major contending Somali groups coming together and reaching agreement as to how the country will be organized and governed in the future." Mr. Henry also stated that while the U.S. has a role to play in encouraging the initiation of dialog, "this will not be easy, but without a political settlement, Somalia's future will be one of continuing instability and suffering, requiring continuing international humanitarian aid on a large scale." ²³

This fact was clearly recognized by the U.S. as we began the UNTAF mission. In a news conference on 14 December 1992, General Joseph P. Hoar, The commander of the U.S. Central Command stated that disarming of Somali clan fighters was essentially "a political issue, one that needs to be settled first and foremost by the Somalis." ²⁴

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali has recognized the difficulty of political reconciliation. Boutros-Ghali has stated that "National reconciliation is a difficult process in the best of circumstances, it is particularly difficult in Somalia because of the multiplicity of parties, factions, and other leaders, and the total absence of law and order in all parts of the country." ²⁵ The very nature of Somali society makes the priority of a political settlement a difficult goal, one that will require a great deal of time, patience, and diplomatic effort. ²⁶ The civil war and subsequent chaos has had a damaging effect on a society which will find it difficult to adapt to peacetime normalcy. Currently, a large number of the people "feel more comfortable with an AK-47 than a plowshare." ²⁷

Achieving a political solution in Somalia will not be easy. Years of Siad Barre's authoritarianism have left a legacy of intolerance in Somalia. In this regard, the human rights

organization "African Rights" has concluded that "the prospects for political reconciliation and the development of an accountable system of government remain extremely uncertain." ²⁸ As Herman J. Cohen, a former Undersecretary of State for African Affairs, has observed:

The rules of the game in Africa can be very hard on the losers. Confidence building, common goals, and other important conflict resolution techniques can be used only after we have convinced all the parties that a negotiated settlement will not jeopardize them, their families, or their principles. Mistrust is often deep and patience is required to make good use of our resources and our efforts. ²⁹

The incident in Kismayu in March 1993 demonstrated that international forces cannot enforce any political agreement by their presence alone: the agreement must, in itself, be politically satisfactory if it is to stand any chance of success. ³⁰ One of the inherent problems with an imposed solution has been the international community's insistence upon peace for its own sake without concerning itself with the issues that have caused and sustained the conflict in the first place. Third parties to the crisis have appeared intent on getting an agreement - any agreement. However, Herman C. Kelman has identified the fact that negotiations must go beyond the achievement of a political agreement. Negotiations must lead to a resolution of the conflict within a "process conducive to structural and attitudinal changes and eventually to reconciliation between the parties and to a transformation of their relationship." ³¹ This necessity is corroborated by Stedman's observation that:

Most civil wars become amenable to settlement only after they have played themselves out with ferocity. A short-term emphasis on ceasefires may only prolong the conflict and mitigate against parties perceiving that their survival depends on political settlement. While attempting mediation or urging negotiation, third parties may inadvertently prolong conflicts. This is the irony: the possibility that humanitarian assistance may extend war and anarchy rather than end it. ³²

The need for Somali solutions to Somali problems is required due to the relatively short-lived impact outside forces can have on Somalia's internal problems. While there are intervention forces in the country, these forces represent the major political actor and overshadow everything else. All negotiations and agreements are undertaken with them as a major factor in the political equation. When they are removed, however, the premises of the

negotiations will change. As a result, civil structures built up by an intervention force are unlikely to survive the withdrawal of that force.³³

The need for an acceptable political settlement in internal conflicts, not the imposition of force by third parties, is recognized as the key to ending civil wars. For some historical perspective, during the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) mission, the Khmer Rouge refused to disarm despite signing an agreement to do so. UNTAC made no effort to enforce disarmament since, according to UNTAC, an estimated 85 percent of the population was outside Khmer Rouge control.³⁴ As a result, the Military Component of UNTAC was not able to conduct its principle task of disarming the competing Cambodian factions.

This failure happened despite the fact that all factions had agreed to disarmament and demobilization in a peace agreement signed by all four factions in Paris in October 1991 - an agreement that took two years to negotiate.³⁵ As soon as the Khmer Rouge refused to cooperate in the demobilization process, the other factions also stopped sending their forces to cantonment sites. Ultimately, less than 25 percent of Cambodian forces were cantoned. In the end, Boutros-Ghali issued a report on the situation in Cambodia to the U.N. Security Council on 20 November 1992 in which he admitted the process of cantonment, disarmament, and demobilization of the four factions had failed and that UNTAC would cease work along those lines.³⁶

Another recent disarmament issue has been the demobilization of El Salvador's guerillas (the Farabundo Marti Liberation Nationale - FMLN) and elements El Salvador's military forces. This disarmament agreement took years to forge as well - A U.N. brokered peace agreement was signed in Mexico in January 1992 that began the machinery to end El Salvador's 12 year civil war. In order to build confidence between the two warring parties, the timetable for the disarmament and demobilization settlement stretched from 1 February 1992, when a cease-fire went into effect, to 15 December 1992 when a formal end to the war was to be declared. Additionally, the destruction of weapons was conducted by the conflicting parties themselves.³⁷

The need for the Somalis to reach a political settlement among themselves is fundamental to resolving the Somali crisis. Lois R. Richards, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Food and Humanitarian Assistance, Agency for International Development, made the following comments before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs: "The Somali people must help themselves. A humanitarian military intervention is not a substitute for peace and reconciliation. Somalis must demonstrate both the political will and the willingness to compromise if the results of any relief and rehabilitation programs which AID engages in are to be sustained and if lasting peace is to be achieved in Somalia." ³⁸

All this is not to say that disarmament is not ultimately necessary. "If a reversion to widespread lawlessness is to be averted, and a civil society restored, disarmament of all factional militias must be pursued fairly and forcefully." ³⁹ Clearly, disarmament of Somalia's clan factions is going to be a long-term process built on political reconciliation and confidence-building measures. It cannot not be imposed by an outside force. For disarmament to happen in the case of Somalia, a political settlement must come first. As President Clinton has stated: "Fundamentally, the solution to Somalia's problems is not a military one. It is political." ⁴⁰

Acceptability

Fundamentally, the criteria of acceptability is a question of cost: how much were the American people willing to pay for disarming the Somali people (how much did we value stability in Somalia)?

Donald E. Nuechterlein lays out a practical framework for discussing this value system in his book United States National Interests in a Changing World. ⁴¹ Nuechterlein defines the national interest as the well-being of American citizens and American enterprise involved in international relations as they are affected by political forces beyond the political control of the U.S. government. Nuechterlein further defines strategic interests as second-order interests derived from a clear perception of national interests. These strategic interests are concerned with the political, economic and military means of protecting the nation. ⁴²

As Nuechterlein has identified: "the problem of correctly defining national interests lies no so much in identifying the broad unchanging interests, but rather assessing the intensity of the interest at different moments in history." ⁴³ To assist in the analysis of this level of intensity, Nuechterlein proposed a four-tiered scale of priorities as a basis for defining more precisely the value that the nation (acting through the government) attaches to specific foreign policy issues. This interests are:

Survival interests: These involve situations where the very existence of the nation is in peril. ⁴⁴

Vital interests: These involve situations where serious harm to the security and well-being of the nation is probable if strong measures, including the use of force, are not taken by the government. The difference between survival and vital interests is the urgency with which the decision to act must be made - survival interests are much more time sensitive than vital interests. ⁴⁵

Major interests: These are situations where serious harm could potentially come to the nation if no action is taken to counter the unfavorable trend abroad. Major interests could potentially affect the security of the nation, the economic well-being of its people, or the stability of the international system. The difference between vital and major interests is due to the difference in perception of the degree of danger and the time available in which to employ diplomatic means. ⁴⁶

Peripheral (or minor) interests: These are situations where little if any harm will result to the entire nation if a "wait and see" policy is adopted. These peripheral interests do not involve a threat to the nation's defense or well-being of the American people, or seriously affect the stability of the international community. Diplomacy, not coercion, is usually used to support peripheral interests. ⁴⁷

In Nuechterlein's model, the first and fourth degrees of interests are the easiest to identify. The issue becomes hazy, however, in the continuum between all four. A basic "rule of thumb" that Nuechterlein recommends is this: if the issue is not important enough to risk war going to war over, it probably is not a vital national interest (if the issue can be compromised on, it is not vital).⁴⁸

In applying Nuechterlein's model to the 1992 crisis in Somalia, it becomes obvious that the Somalia crisis was not at the level of a survival or vital interest for the U.S. The only way that the Somalia crisis could even be considered a major interest would be if the crisis was indeed a threat to the international system. This would be very difficult to prove. As identified in Chapter 4, even though all six 1992 U.N. Security Council resolutions on the crisis in Somalia identify "the threat to international peace and security," the exact nature of this "threat" is never explicitly stated. On the balance, the crisis in Somalia was at most in the grey area between a major interest and a peripheral interest, but more probably merely a U.S. peripheral interest.

Determining the importance of the Somalia crisis to the U.S. is fundamental. This placement will determine the price - in lives and money - the American people may be willing to pay for any policy course of action. As a result of the low value that Somalia held for the U.S., there could not be much hope that the American people would support a long-term, dedicated effort to resolving Somalia's internal problems, much less the loss of American lives in the process.

The disarmament of Somalis as a course of action for UNITAF fails the acceptability criteria. Clearly, the Somalis would have resisted a policy of coercive disarmament.⁴⁹ Such a risk is recognized in Mr. Cohen's response to a Congressman's probe about why the U.S. was not going to disarm the factions. Mr. Cohen replied: "Well the United States is not going in to act as a lightning rod in order to unite the Somalis. The deployment is to strictly get the food through to the hungry people and to stop the starvation. That is the reason."⁵⁰

A policy of coercive disarmament would have meant nothing less than involving the U.S. in a low intensity conflict against the Somali people. Such a policy would have risked provoking severe hostility from the local population and potentially ignite the latent flames of Islamic fundamentalism.⁵¹ The nature of the Somali society and culture would have virtually guaranteed resistance - maybe not even by a majority of Somalis and perhaps only by a very small minority, but the fact remains that the Somalis would be able to inflict casualties on the UNITAF force beyond what the U.S. was willing to pay. In testimony before the House of Representatives on 17 February 1993, Robert Houdek (Deputy Assistant Secretary of the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs) made the following statement:

You don't want to go into a relatively hostile environment saying "I am coming to disarm you; and I am going to sort of knock down your door, walk in and take your guns away." There are three things that can be very dear to a Somalis heart. They are his wife, his family, and his gun.⁵²

The history of Somalia is rich with the stories of various clans who at one time or another engaged in bitter, protracted guerilla warfare with foreign armies who came to occupy their region.⁵³ The general consensus, even before the intervention began, was that the Somalis would defend their honor if they felt it impugned.⁵⁴ Most Somali clans take great pride in being "the tough natives who stand up to the powerful Western powers that come to display their military prowess"⁵⁵ The danger in Somali resistance to disarmament can be seen in their cultural history. Traditionally, clans would only ban together in the equilibrium among nomadic clan enclaves was disrupted, returning afterwards to their exclusionary ways.⁵⁶

For example, instead of just becoming another Somali clan that has been vanquished by foreign forces, Aidid's clansmen would rather be wiped off the face of the earth than to submit to the U.N. and be humiliated in front of other Somali clans.⁵⁷ This point was made clear after the 3 October 1993 fight in Mogadishu. U.S. officials said they were surprised by Aidid's ability and willingness to commit large numbers of his fighters to battle and by their tenacity to stand and fight technologically superior U.N. forces,⁵⁸ but in fact the Somali reaction was totally consistent

with their history and culture. Little in history has changed. In the 1880's, J.W.C. Kirk, the British Counsel in Zanzibar wrote: "It is wonderful how little we have impressed the Somalis with respect of our superior power." ⁵⁹

Any attempt by UNITAF to disarm the Somalis would have made UNITAF just another faction in the chaos. The eminent military sociologist Samuel P. Huntington has identified the problem of becoming an active participant in the conflict of the country concerned:

One or more parties in that conflict may perceive any outside involvement as a hostile act. Thus by deploying American troops, from the viewpoint of the local combatants, we become the enemy. Inevitably while we are there for humanitarian purposes our presence has political and military consequences. ⁶⁰

In perhaps one of the most poignant understatements of the Somali crisis, one observer noted that while waging the fight against the Siad Barre regime "the opposition groups relied on rural militias. Pastoralists are a traditionally armed people. The civil war has caused many of them to be armed to the teeth, *and it would be counterproductive to coerce an armed people.*" ⁶¹

Relief workers have also pointed out that the overall success of any scheme to disarm Somalis is contingent on giving Somali fighters (many of whom have no other means of making a living other than looting) an alternative livelihood. This would ultimately require a long-term commitment to economic reconstruction and political reconciliation, ⁶² a role the U.S. clearly had no intention of playing. A resident of Mogadishu made this perceptive comment:

People are the same everywhere. The gunman here also looks into the future and what does he see? Despair and more despair. You think he is going to put his gun down unless society gives him an alternative? No, not in Mogadishu or Baidoa anymore than in Los Angeles. The difference is only that the structures that keep potential gunmen off the streets here have collapsed. ⁶³

Young and heavy users of quat, these young gunmen would have been the hardest to disarm. "Food-for-arms," one of the U.N.'s ideas, is unlikely to appeal to people who are commonly classified as "armed, drugged, teenage hooligans." Weapons not only give them personal security, but also provide access to food. ⁶⁴ Their fear of being apprehended by

UNITAF forces would not have restrained them, but only made them more inclined to shoot first. ⁶⁵

A course of action that included the coercive disarmament of Somalis would have moved the U.S. beyond the original UNITAF mission statement and firmly into the realm of peace-enforcement. Despite the misleading attachment of the word "peace," peace-enforcement is nothing less than a form of limited war. As defined in Chapter 1, peace-enforcement can be defined as:

A form of combat, armed intervention, or the threat of armed intervention that is pursuant to international license authorizing the coercive use military power to compel compliance with international sanctions or resolutions -- the primary purpose of which is the maintenance or restoration of peace under conditions broadly acceptable to the international community. ⁶⁶

Donald M. Snow of the U.S. Army War College has observed that, unlike peacekeepers, peace-enforcers are often not welcome by one or both sides. The mission of the forces employed in a peace-enforcement missions is to impose a cease-fire or other settlement that is opposed by one or both (or all) combatants. As a result, the peace-enforcers cannot maintain the neutrality that distinguishes peacekeepers. ⁶⁷ The analogy used to describe peace-enforcement operations is that of a policeman stepping into a domestic dispute.

Dr. Alan Gropman of the National Defense University has also observed that the synonym for peace-enforcement is war. ⁶⁸ This description is supported by Clausewitz' definition of war as "an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will." ⁶⁹ In a peace-enforcement situation, we are attempting to compel one or more sides in a conflict to stop the activity in which they are participating - such as continuing to wage a civil war. Peace-enforcement is nothing less than a type of limited war. This is the fundamental difference between peacekeeping and peace-enforcement: "to engage in peace-enforcement in essence requires deciding to go to war; peacekeeping does not." ⁷⁰

One of the major challenges in the entire peace support business, not just the situation in Somalia, is that they usually fail to meet the vital interest criteria. The existence of a U.N.

mandate is irrelevant. The fact remains that a peace-enforcement mission involves us in a situation where we possibly (probably) have no vital interests. Peace operations usually take place in foreign cultures and political systems where the outcomes do not obviously affect U.S. vital interests. In the past, Cold War competition made outcomes in the third world seem more important. These events now seem too marginal to meet the vital interest criteria.

The difficulty we face in the peace-enforcement mission is in the nature of the environment in which the mission is executed. As identified above, while we may have very little stake in the outcome of an internal civil war that falls outside our vital national interest, this may not be the case for the people who are fighting. Many third world conflicts are internal struggles for political control that are by their nature total war for the participants. As a result, one or more of the participants in the struggle are fighting for their very existence.

In an intriguing article in Foreign Affairs entitled "The New Interventionists," Stephen John Stedman identified some of the hazards in peace-enforcement operations. He observed that

While U.N. troops may carry international legitimacy, internal parties will still control the asymmetries of civil war. The fact remains that the parties win by not losing; the will of those who intervene will wane over the long term if resource and human costs run high. Additionally, the intervention will probably be one of many commitments for outsiders while internal actors will be singleminded in their dedication.⁷¹

Clausewitz provides us with an insight to the outcome of such a situation:

When the tensions and motives of war are slight we can imagine the very prospect of defeat might be enough to cause one side to yield. If from the very start the other side feels that this is probable, it will obviously concentrate on bringing about *this probability* rather than take the long way around and totally defeat the enemy.⁷²

Clausewitz had it right. A participant in a civil war who is fighting for his survival has a much higher stake in the outcome than we do and "In war, the will is directed at an animate object that *reacts*."⁷³ Even though our motives may be totally altruistic, one or more of the parties in the conflict will probably not be prepared to comply. We can only assume that any opponent knows of our Vietnam experience and that he recognizes our unwillingness to lose American lives over debatable objectives.

So what could bring us to intervene in a situation where we have no vital interest? One of the potential driving factors behind any involvement in peace-enforcement operations is what Snow has identified the "Do Something" syndrome. This phenomenon occurs through the impact of global television coverage of a crisis. This coverage raises the possibility that atrocious violence can create a public perception of a vital interest (one worth fighting for) on humanitarian grounds "in situations where a more dispassionate analysis would not suggest that intensity of interest." ⁷⁴

Starving Somali children (and maimed Bosnians) make powerful images on our televisions and produce a moral outrage, creating a feeling among the public that we must do something to stop it. Moral outrage, however, is not a policy. ⁷⁵ While there may be public clamor for action initially, public support rapidly evaporates with the first American casualties. There is no national will to sustain a peace-enforcement operation where our vital interests are not clearly at stake. Our own doctrine succinctly states the dilemma: "When U.S. interests are absent or minor, the United States may not expect international or domestic approval of its involvement." ⁷⁶

In his classic book On Strategy - A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War, Harry G. Summers identified that the failure to invoke the national will was one of our major strategic failures of the Vietnam war. ⁷⁷ There is a chance that by embracing the peace support business too closely we are once again ignoring the critical relationships identified in Clausewitz's trinity, especially the critical element of national will, in our pursuit of peace support operations.

Clausewitz provided this description of "trinity":

As a total phenomenon [war's] dominant tendencies always make war a paradoxical trinity - composed of primordial violence, hatred and enmity...; of the play of chance and probability...; and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.

The first of these three aspects mainly concerns the people; the second the commander and his army; the third the government. The passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people; the scope which the play of courage and talent will enjoy in the realm of probability and chance depends on the particular character of the commander and the army; but the political aims are the business of government alone.⁷⁸

The government and military sides of the equation are being solved for peace support operations. Politically, we have consistently expressed our support for a more active U.N. since at least 1991. Additionally, the military, especially the Army, has developed a virtual cottage industry around peace support operations. What has been missing, however, is a recognition of the frailty of national will in these types of missions: "the passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people." While there may be initial clamor to "do something" this support rapidly dissolves with the first American casualties.

The U.S. humanitarian intervention in Somalia is a clear example of this phenomenon. Beginning in July 1992, U.S. news programs were full of pictures from the crisis in Somalia. Ultimately, under public and congressional pressure, President Bush was compelled to launch Operation "Restore Hope" on purely humanitarian grounds.

This intervention initially had a large amount of public support. A Harris Poll conducted in December 1992 as Operation "Restore Hope" was launched, showed that the U.S. intervention was favored by 75% of those polled.⁷⁹ Public approval remained fairly high through the transition from the U.S.-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) to the U.N.-led UNOSOM II mission in May 1993 and, as late as 28 June 1993, 62% of those polled continued to support U.S. involvement in Somalia. However, this support fell to 33% approval after the 3 October 1993 firefight in Mogadishu that left 18 Americans dead.⁸⁰ and led to public and congressional clamor to get out of Somalia. The lesson (re)learned is clear: the U.S. public will probably support peace support missions (especially those with a humanitarian justification), but they are not willing to pay for their support in American lives.

Clausewitz has identified our task:

The first, the supreme, the most far reaching act of judgment that the statesman and the commander have to make is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive." ⁸¹

Peace-enforcement is really nothing less than another term for limited war. While it may be true that the "contradictory demands of the public" and "the rapid shifts of opinion, have made it terribly difficult for any President to manage our foreign policies" ⁸² it is critical that American policy-makers recognize the shallowness of the American public's support for such operations in the post-Cold War World, especially where no vital interests are at stake. To fail to take account of this risks committing U.S. forces to operations that we do not have the national will to sustain.

In the words of Samuel P. Huntington: "It is morally unjustifiable and politically indefensible that members of the Armed Forces should be killed to prevent Somalis from killing one another." ⁸³ Additionally, Huntington has observed that

The United States has a clear humanitarian interest in preventing genocide and starvation, and Americans will support intervention to deal with such tragedies within limits...Under such circumstances the Nation may even accept some American casualties. But the United States has no interest in which clan dominates Somalia. ⁸⁴

As demonstrated by the analysis above, a policy of disarming the Somali clan factions (which would have necessitated disarming the entire Somali population) fails all three criteria: feasibility, suitability, and acceptability. The stakes were simply not high enough in Somalia to risk a low intensity conflict in order to carry out a policy that was both unfeasible and unsuitable to the situation.

General Joseph P. Hoar, the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Central Command during Operation "Restore Hope" has identified that the initial operational requirement for the operation was a clear mission statement:

Great care was taken to develop an approved, well-defined mission with attainable, measurable objectives prior to the mission commencing. Disarmament was excluded from the mission because it was neither realistically achievable nor a prerequisite for the core mission of providing a secure relief operations. Selective "disarming as necessary" became an implied task which led to the cantonment of heavy weapons and gave UNITAF the ability to conduct weapons sweeps.⁸⁵

Clearly, in the context of the situation in Somalia that existed in late-1992 and our national interests, the mission established for U.S. forces during Operation "Restore Hope" in that "well-defined mission" was the correct approach to the Somali crisis from the U.S. perspective.

ENDNOTES

¹Sound Military Decisions (Newport, Rhode Island: U.S. Naval War College, 1942), 9, 30, 34.

²Raymond W. Copson and Theodoros S. Dagne, Somalia: Operation Restore Hope, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 10 February 1993), 7.

³Robert Houdek, "Update on Progress in Somalia," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 4, no. 8 (22 February 1993): 99.

⁴Copson and Dagne, 5.

⁵Keith B. Richburg, "The Guns of Mogadishu," Washington Post, 6 December 1992, sec. A, p. 34.

⁶Andrew Lycett, "Somalia Peace - Aideed on Top?" New African, May 1993, 35.

⁷Michael A. Gordon, "Americans Will Find Somalia Full of Arms Provided by Superpowers," New York Times, 9 December 1992, sec. A, p. 6.

⁸U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, The Crisis in Somalia: Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 102d Cong., 1st sess., 17 December 1992, 29.

⁹African Rights has also identified weapons movement across the Kenyan-Somali border. See Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, African Rights, ed. Rakiya Omaar and Alex de Waal, May 1993, 22.

¹⁰Keith B. Richburg, "Aideed's Forces May Have Been Underestimated, Officials Concede," Washington Post, 8 October 1993, sec. A, p. 18.

¹¹U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Recent Developments in Somalia: Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, 103d Cong., 1st sess., 17 February 1993, 22.

¹²Marc Michaelson, "Somalia: The Painful Road to Reconciliation," Africa Today 40, no. 2 (2d Quarter 1993): 59.

¹³African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 25. African Rights reports that "For days afterwards, the hospital in Kismayu was deluged with casualties from the fighting, many of them suffering from knife and axe wounds.

¹⁴Hussein Ali Dualeh, "From Siad Barre to Farah Aideed," The Weekly Review (Kenya), 3 September 1993, 36.

¹⁵African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 24.

¹⁶Scott Peterson in "Somalia Aid Workers Wait in Fear" The Daily Telegraph, 14 December 1992 as quoted in African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 23.

¹⁷African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 24.

¹⁸Jane Perlez, "U.S. Role is not to Disarm, Aid to a Top Somali Insists," New York Times, 6 December 1992, sec 1, p. 14.

¹⁹Richburg, "The Guns of Mogadishu," p.A34.

²⁰Mark Doyle, "A Dangerous Place," Africa Report 38, no. 6 (November-December 1993): 42 and African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 22. Additionally, due to the possibility of disarmament, the value of small weapons that could be easily concealed (pistols, hand grenades and knives) increased.

²¹Robert I Rotberg, "The Clinton Administration and Africa," Current History 92, no. 574 (May 1993): 194.

²²The Crisis in Somalia, 12 - 13.

²³U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, 102d Cong., 2d sess., 16 September 1992, 78.

²⁴John Lancaster, "General Bars Disarming Somali Clans," Washington Post, 15 December 1992, sec A, p. 1.

²⁵Samuel M. Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos: Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1993), 32.

²⁶Ibid., 31.

²⁷Ibid., 24.

²⁸African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 35.

²⁹Herman J. Cohen, "Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution in Africa," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 4, no. 16 (19 April 1993): 270.

- ³⁰African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 33.
- ³¹Herbert C. Kelman, "Interactive Problem-Solving: Social-Psychological Approach to Conflict Resolution," in Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution eds. John Burton and Frank Dukes (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1990), 200.
- ³²Stephen John Stedman, "The New Interventionists," Foreign Affairs 72, no. 1 (The Year Ahead 1993): 9.
- ³³African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 55.
- ³⁴"From Paris to Phnom Penh," The Economist, 14 November 1992, 16.
- ³⁵Karl Farris, "UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia: On Balance, A Success," Parameters 24, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 41.
- ³⁶*Ibid.*, 45.
- ³⁷Shirley Christian, "El Salvador Guerillas Begin Destroying Weapons," New York Times, 3 December 1992, sec. A, p. 6.
- ³⁸The Crisis in Somalia, 11.
- ³⁹Peter Tarnoff, "U.S. Policy in Somalia," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 4, no. 32 (9 August 1993): 567.
- ⁴⁰William J. Clinton, "U.S. Military Involvement in Somalia," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 4, no. 42 (18 October 1993): 714.
- ⁴¹Donald A. Nuechterlein, United States Interests in a Changing World, (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1973).
- ⁴²*Ibid.*, 6 - 7.
- ⁴³*Ibid.*, 9.
- ⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 10 - 11.
- ⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 14.
- ⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁷Ibid., 26 - 27.

⁴⁸Ibid., 28.

⁴⁹All attempts to achieve a comprehensive disarmament agreement - in which the Somalis would agree to disarmament and cantonment of heavy weapons - have generally failed. During the initial stages of Operation "Restore Hope," an agreement to disarm was signed in Addis Ababa on 15 January 1993 by 14 of the major factions. This agreement soon broke down, however, as each of the factions accused the others of breaking the agreement.

⁵⁰The Crisis in Somalia, 16 - 17.

⁵¹James Wyllie, "Somalia - State Disintegration and Regional Stability," Jane's Intelligence Review 5, no. 2 (February 1993): 72.

⁵²Recent Developments in Somalia, 11.

⁵³Abdul Abdl, "Somalia's Clans Will Fight On, Until The Bitter End," Washington Times, 30 September 1993, sec A, p. 21.

⁵⁴Jane Perlez, "Somali Clans Plan Last Grab for Advantage," New York Times, 9 December 1992, sec A, p. 17.

⁵⁵Abdul Abdl, p. A21.

⁵⁶Jonathan Stevenson, "Hope Restored in Somalia?" Foreign Policy 91 (Summer 93): 142.

⁵⁷Abdul Abdl, p. A21.

⁵⁸Richburg, "Aided's Forces May Have Been Underestimated, Officials Concede," p. A18.

⁵⁹Perlez, "Somali Clans Plan Last Grab for Advantage," p. A17.

⁶⁰Samuel P. Huntington, "New Contingencies, Old Roles" Joint Force Quarterly 2 (Autumn 1993): 42.

⁶¹Hussein B. Adam, "Somalia: Rural Production Organizations and Prospects for Reconstruction" in Beyond Conflict in the Horn, ed. Martin Doornbos, Lionel Cliffe, Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed and John Markakis (Trenton, New Jersey: Red Sea Press, 1993), 160.

⁶²"U.S. Commits Forces to Somalia, But For How Long?" Africa Report 38, no. 1 (January-February 1993): 6.

- ⁶³African Rights, Somalia - Operations Restore Hope: A Preliminary Assessment, 27.
- ⁶⁴"Somalia: At Last Someone Listens," Africa Confidential 33, no. 17 (28 August 1992): 2.
- ⁶⁵Stevenson, 145.
- ⁶⁶William W. Allen, Antoine D. Johnson, John T. Nelson, "Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement Operations," Military Review 73, no. 10 (October 1993): 52.
- ⁶⁷Donald M. Snow, Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peace-Enforcement: The U.S. Role in the New International Order, (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, February 1993).
- ⁶⁸Alan L. Gropman, "Peace-Enforcement is an Oxymoron - Its Synonym is War," Armed Forces Journal International 131, no. 7 (February 1994): 8.
- ⁶⁹Carl von Clausewitz, On War, ed and trans by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), Book 1, Chapter 1, 75.
- ⁷⁰Snow, 31.
- ⁷¹Stedman, 8.
- ⁷²Clausewitz, Book 1, Chapter 1, 91.
- ⁷³Clausewitz, Book 2, Chapter 3, 149.
- ⁷⁴Snow, 6.
- ⁷⁵Gray, 15.
- ⁷⁶U.S. Army, FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 5 December 1990), 1-9.
- ⁷⁷Harry G. Summers, Jr., On Strategy - A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War, (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1984), 43.
- ⁷⁸Clausewitz, Book 1, Chapter 1, 89.
- ⁷⁹"United States - American Troops in Somalia" World Opinion Update 27, no. 1, (January 1993): 6.

⁸⁰"Shifting Views on Somalia" Los Angeles Times, 7 October 1993, sec. A, p. 9.

⁸¹Clausewitz, Book 1, Chapter 1, 88.

⁸²I.M. Destler, Leslie H. Gelb, and Anthony Lake, Our Own Worst Enemy - The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 82.

⁸³Huntington, 42.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Joseph P. Hoar, "A CINC's Perspective," Joint Force Quarterly 2 (Autumn 1993): 58.

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